THE SOVIET COUNTERINSURGENCY IN THE WESTERN BORDERLANDS

ALEXANDER STATIEV

CAMBRIDGE

The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands

The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands investigates the Soviet response to nationalist insurgencies that occurred between 1944 and 1953 in the regions the Soviet Union annexed after the Nazi-Soviet pact: eastern Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Based on new archival data, Alexander Statiev presents the first comprehensive study of Soviet counterinsurgency that ties together the security tools and populist policies intended to attract the local populations. The book traces the origins of the Soviet pacification doctrine and then presents a comparative analysis of the rural societies in eastern Poland and the Baltic states on the eve of the Soviet invasion. This analysis is followed by a description of the anti-Communist resistance movements. Subsequently, the author shows how ideology affected the Soviet pacification doctrine and examines the major means to enforce the doctrine: agrarian reforms, deportations, amnesties, informant networks, covert operations, and local militias. The book also demonstrates how the Soviet atheist regime used the church in the struggle against guerrillas and explains why this regime could not curb the random violence of its police. The final chapter discusses the Soviet experience in the global context.

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To
John Ferris

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Glossary

Abwehr	German military intelligence
AK	*Armija Krajowa* (Home Army)
CC	Central Committee
Cheka	*Vserossiiskaia Chrezvychainaia Komissiia po bor'be s kontrrevoliutsiei i sabotazhem* (The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counterrevolution and Sabotage, the Bolshevik secret police in 1918–1922)
GHQ	General Headquarters
GUBB	*Glavnoe upravlenie po bor'be s banditizmom NKVD SSSR* (Head Directorate for the Struggle against Banditry)
GULAG	*Glavnoe upravlenie lagerei* (Head Directorate for Labour Camps)
kolkhoz	*kollektivnoe khoziaistvo* (collective farm)
LAF	Lithuanian Activist Front
LLA	*Lietuvos Laisves Armija* (Lithuanian Liberation Army)
MGB	*Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti* (Ministry of State Security after 15 March 1946)
MVD	*Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del* (Ministry of Internal Affairs after 15 March 1946)
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NKGB	*Narodnyi komissariat gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti* (People's Commissariat of State Security, until 15 March 1946), separated from the NKVD on 14 April 1943
NKVD	*Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennikh del* (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, until 15 March 1946)

OBB	*Otdel po bor'be s banditizmom NKVD* (Republican or provincial section of GUBB)
Omakaitse	Estonian Home Guard during the German occupation
OUN	Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists
PCNL	Polish Committee of National Liberation, the pro-Communist government of Poland
provod	OUN's leading agency at various levels
SB	*Sluzhba bezpeky* (OUN's Security Service)
SD	*Sicherheitsdienst* (German Security Service)
SMERSh	*Smert' shpionam* (Soviet Military Counterintelligence Service)
sovkhoz	*sovkhoz sovetskoe khoziaistvo* (state farm)
UNKVD, UNKGB	Provincial NKVD and NKGB branches
UPA	*Ukrains'ka Povstans'ka Armiia* (Ukrainian Insurgent Army)
VKP(b)	*Vsesoiuznaia Kommunisticheskaia Partiia (bol'shevikov)* (Communist Party of the Soviet Union)
VLIK	*Vyriausias Lietuvos Išlaisvinimo Komitetas* (Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania)

Introduction

When Soviet partisans made their first deep raids into western Ukraine in early 1943, they met thousands of nationalist guerrillas. Some of them had rifles, often without sights or magazines; others carried only sabers, pikes made out of scythes, axes, or dummy rifles fitted with window bolts imitating a rifle bolt, so they looked real from a distance. They also had a few dummy machine guns with rattles and wheelbarrows equipped with tin funnels amplifying the sound of a rifle shot. The latter were meant to create the impression of artillery cannonade.[1] Although the Soviet partisans scorned the weaponry of these guerrillas, they were surprised by the numbers of nationalists and their support from the local population. The partisans had orders to maintain neutrality toward the nationalists; they also had to urge any independent guerrilla force to fight the Germans. The nationalists, however, rejected any cooperation with the Soviets; the armistice between them only lasted for several months.[2] After the Red Army reoccupied the territories the USSR had gained in 1939–1940, the Soviet administration faced an armed resistance in all western regions but Moldova. The two arms of the Soviet police, the NKVD and NKGB,[3] quickly wrecked the urban nationalist underground, but they could

[1] General Vasilii Begma, head of Rovno Partisan HQ, "Spravka o sotoianii garnizonov vraga na territorii Rovenskoi oblasti [Information on Enemy Garrisons in Rovno Province]" (September 1943). Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'iednan' Ukraïny [Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine, hereafter cited as TsDAHOU], f. 1, op. 23, d. 585, ll. 52, 53; Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), p. 13; "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal (UIZh)* 4:96, 1994; V. I. Klokov, *Kovel'skii uzel* (Kiev: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1981), p. 198.

[2] Vasilii Sergienko, deputy head of the Central Partisan HQ, to Pavel Sudoplatov (12 December 1942). Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii [Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, hereafter cited as RGASPI], f. 69, op. 1, d. 747, l. 165; A. V. Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia v 1942–1943 rr.* (Kyiv: 1999), p. 198.

[3] After February 1941, the Soviet police consisted of two major branches, People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, *Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennikh del* (NKVD), and People's Commissariat of State Security, *Narodnyi komissariat gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti* (NKGB). The NKVD dealt predominantly with internal threats to security, whereas NKGB dealt with external ones, although in practice their authority overlapped. In July 1941, the NKGB was merged with

not control rural areas for several years. The guerrilla war remained the major obstacle to the sovietization of these regions until the early 1950s.

This book examines the Soviet fight against anti-Communist resistance in western Ukraine, western Belorussia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in the period following their incorporation into the USSR after the Nazi-Soviet pact (Figure I.1).

Insurgency is defined in this study as a large-scale popular armed resistance – a people's war – and *counterinsurgency* as a complex of military, security, and social policies aimed at terminating such a war.

This book is not a history of the Soviet police force. The reactions of the Soviet state to other types of resistance, such as strikes, riots, political conspiracies, isolated cases of political terrorism, and campaigns of civil disobedience, are beyond the scope of this study. My goal is to investigate the Soviet counterinsurgency model employed in the western borderlands and assess its rationality in the context of a totalitarian state that faced armed resistance during the apocalyptic fight on the Eastern Front and the dawn of the Cold War.

Frontier regions have a unique social environment. They are populated by people with diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural identities that may be ranked in different ways. Ethnic identity may be either the dominating identity or subordinated to citizenship. I will call the former *simple* and the latter *nested* identity.[4] The simple identity presumes clear-cut boundaries among ethnic, racial, and religious groups. It is *exclusive;* for instance, one either is a Galician Ukrainian or not. The nested identity is *inclusive;* persons with such an identity see themselves as belonging to one group at one level and to another at a different level. In the other words, a person regarding himself or herself as Galician Ukrainian still can identify at different levels with other West Ukrainians, with all other Ukrainians, with the East Slavic community that along with Ukrainians also includes Russians and Belorussians, and with fellow citizens regardless of ethnic background (Figure I.2). For such people, one or another level may be operative in different contexts; these individuals readily change one identity for another in response to circumstances. For a person with a simple identity, the circle of people perceived as "us" is far narrower. A multiethnic state usually supports the nested identities of its people, thus establishing citizenship as the identity of the highest rank.

Many of the borderland people cherish their simple identities as a vital part of self that distinguishes them from the rest of the world; the identities of others are blurred by intermarriages, daily interaction with their multicultural neighbors, or the temptation to present themselves as members of

the NKVD. In April 1943, they were again separated. In March 1946, the NKVD and NKGB were renamed the Ministry of Internal Affairs, *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del* (MVD), and the Ministry of State Security, *Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti* (MGB).

[4] O. M. Mladenova, "Etnonimiia i natsional'noe samosoznanie," *Voprosy onomastiki* 5: 66–70, (2008).

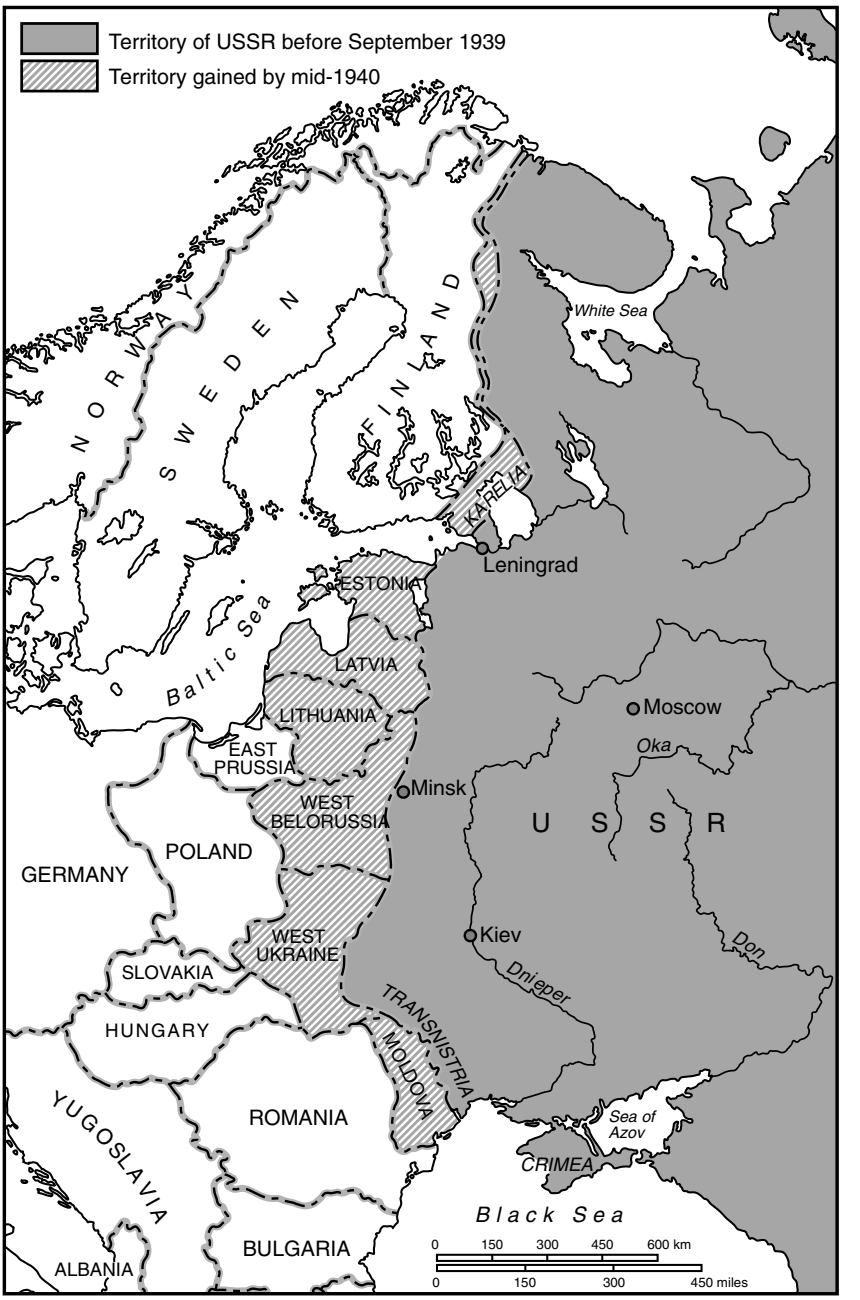

FIGURE 1.1 The western borderlands. Based on a map appearing in Thurston and Bonwestsch. *The People's War: Popular Responses to World War II in the Soviet Union* (2000).

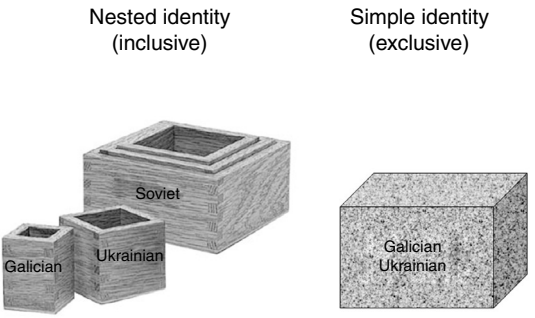

FIGURE I.2 Nested and simple identities in Galicia, western Ukraine.

social, ethnic, or religious groups favored by the state. Borderland people maintain close ties with relatives abroad, and some of them have lived in neighboring states with different social systems. Since information about the outside world is more easily available to those residing near frontiers, people living in the borderlands tend to mistrust government propaganda and question the value system adopted by mainstream society as well as the notions it accepts as absolute truths. With their less-than-perfect loyalty to the state, frontier communities are receptive to separatist ideas and resist the government's effort to fully integrate them into the dominating culture. People of the Basque Country, Alsace, southern Tyrol, Transylvania, Kashmir, and Tibet stubbornly maintain their simple identities despite efforts by the Spanish, French, Italian, Romanian, Indian, and Chinese governments to assimilate them. Yet sizable parts of every borderland ethnic community affiliate with their state; they seek integration into the majority and dislike the unrest stirred by their neighbors with a simple identity. The integration proceeds more smoothly in countries with a tolerant political culture and high living standards, but poverty and oppression tend to perpetuate the simple identity.

When the Soviet state annexed neighboring lands in 1939–1940, the living standard of their populations dropped, and they found the Soviet system far more authoritarian and interventionist than previous governments had been. Stalinists sought to crush any dissent, to establish an exact copy of the Soviet system with total control over the local societies, and to foster loyalty to the state by replacing simple with nested identity. These policies, implemented frantically and savagely, provoked popular resistance that emerged in the spring of 1941 and continued until the early 1950s. This struggle cost roughly as many lives as the United States lost in the European military theater during World War II. This conflict cannot be reduced, as was usually done during the Cold War, to a straightforward confrontation between nationalist resistance and Soviet security forces. Rather, it was a multidimensional and complex phenomenon, and for some groups involved, the fight between pro- and anti-Soviet forces was secondary to the conflict's other components.

Any insurgency consists of a relatively small group of hard-core militants and a much larger group of active supporters who join for various motivations not necessarily coinciding with those of their leaders. An even larger number of people give the rebels passive and conditional support without joining them. Even if insurgents offer an attractive agenda, they can enlist only a small minority of the population and secure at best the passive support of the majority. Some local people actively oppose the guerrillas, and many, usually most, prefer to stay neutral in the conflict. Both guerrillas and government deny them this option, forcing them to choose sides.

Suppression of rebellion by force alone costs many bystanders' lives and is often counterproductive. Pacification theories state that counterinsurgents should balance political and military measures, giving primacy to the former. The government has to identify the causes of the unrest, develop reforms targeting its roots, and simultaneously apply coercion to its manifestations. It should coordinate civilian and police agencies toward the desired goals. The correct proportion of stick, carrot, and pro-government propaganda should pull guerrilla fish from the water in which they swim, attract the passive part of the local population, and intimidate rebel supporters into neutrality. The state ought to offer amnesty combined with relentless pressure so as to make most insurgents feel that surrender involves less risk than continuing the resistance. It also should raise paramilitary forces from beneficiaries of its policy to perform routine defensive missions, thus relieving security troops for offensive operations. This militia also helps the authorities to internalize the conflict by involving local people in the fight on the government side. The army should adjust its strategy, organization, and weaponry to counterinsurgency, rejecting conventional military doctrine. Finally, the government must monitor the operations of the security forces closely, promptly punishing random violence that may frustrate the best strategy.

Most counterinsurgents have understood these postulates, but the friction of pacification has not allowed them to follow the ideal script. Some governments have misinterpreted the cause of unrest, and their reforms intended to undermine the appeal of the insurgents have been irrelevant. Others have abstained from reforms because they conflicted with the interests of ruling elites or seemed economically unwise. Civilian institutions, army, and police have failed to coordinate their actions and have thus hindered each other. State agencies have not been able to establish communication with the population, and their propaganda therefore has remained futile. The fine balance between repression and clemency has been hard to define. Armies have tended to view counterinsurgency merely as a limited conventional war; consequently, a reluctance to take casualties and reliance on firepower has made civilians the major victims of counterinsurgency operations. The raising of a pro-government militia always has been tricky because the state could not assess the loyalty of recruits. Security forces have engaged in random violence that only undermined the government's policy. Usually states have tilted toward coercion far beyond the rational limits and neglected nonviolent means of

pacification because military actions and repressions seemed to be the simpler solution. They have focused on destruction of the insurgents rather than their civilian infrastructure and neglected to control the civilian population that supplied guerrillas with reinforcements exceeding their casualties.

This study examines how the Soviet government tackled these problems. It begins with the origins of the Soviet counterinsurgency doctrine and identification of its major components, followed by an analysis of the borderland societies on the eve of the Soviet invasion and the impact of the brief Soviet presence in 1939–1941, the German occupation in 1941–1944, and the Soviet reconquest in 1944. Afterward, I proceed to a survey of the anti-Communist resistance movements. The resistance occurred predominantly in the countryside, and most insurgents were farmers; this is why I primarily address relations between the state and farmers rather than other social groups. Since, in this type of warfare, political strategy matters more than military actions, I focus not on combat itself but on the pacification doctrine and the major means chosen to enforce it. I show how the state system and ideology shaped the Soviet counterinsurgency and discuss the causes for its successes and failures. In conclusion, I contrast the Soviet experience with that of other states.

Since this study compares the evolutions of unique societies, insurgencies, and pacification methods in four distinct historical periods (the interwar years, the first Soviet occupation in 1939–1941, the German occupation in 1941–1944, and the Soviet reconquest after 1944) and five distinct regions (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, western Belorussia, and western Ukraine), it is more convenient to structure the text by blending chronologic and thematic principles rather than working within a strict chronologic or thematic framework. I introduce readers to each stage of the conflict by analyzing all concomitant resistance movements in a given period and then proceed to the next period. Every counterinsurgency strategy, however, is examined only once, from the beginning of the conflict to its end. This methodology preserves the narrative unity of both individual social conflicts and the strategies used to solve them across all these regions.

It was the Soviet Communist party alone that formulated the counterinsurgency strategy. Except for a few senior police officials, who simultaneously belonged to top party agencies, the security forces had no say in strategy. Their authority was limited purely to tactics. In order to ensure that regional party committees would follow Moscow's directives, in November and December 1944, the Politburo established watchdogs in the Baltic republics in the form of bureaus responsible to the Communist Party Central Committee [VKP(b) CC bureaus]. These bureaus, headed by trusted officials from the old territories, monitored the work of the regional Communist parties and reported to Moscow. The pacification strategy in the Baltic region stemmed from permanent clashes between local leaders, who attempted to moderate the policy dictated by the center, and the bureaus given the task of enforcing it. Moscow presented the bureaus as mere intermediaries between regional leaders and the Politburo, but usually the bureaus had more real power than did the first

secretaries of regional Communist parties. The resistance of Baltic administrators delayed rather than altered the implementation of policies directed by the center. By 1947, Moscow overcame the resistance of the Baltic leaders, and in March of that year it dissolved the bureaus. Nikita Khrushchev and Panteleimon Ponomarenko, the first secretaries of the Ukrainian and Belorussian Communist parties, had well-established reputations and high prestige in the party hierarchy. They had greater freedom of action in pacification matters than their Baltic counterparts, yet this freedom usually was limited to tactics. The uniform pacification strategy formulated by the Politburo had to be implemented in every republic.

While the party set the strategic pacification objectives, the security forces had to develop tactical means to meet those objectives. The Red Army rarely fought guerrillas. Regulations dating back to the collectivization in the old territories prohibited the use of regular forces against insurgents.[5] The two major security agencies engaged in counterinsurgency were the Head Directorate for Struggle against Banditry [*Glavnoe upravlenie po bor'be s banditizmom* (GUBB)] and the Head Directorate for NKVD Security Troops (*Glavnoe upravlenie vnutrennikh voisk NKVD*). The GUBB, organized on 1 December 1944, was the major police counterinsurgency agency. It developed police tactics, gathered intelligence, launched covert operations, supervised the militia, and coordinated the efforts of security troops, police, and militia. The GUBB ran "struggle against banditry" sections [*Otdely po bor'be s banditizmom* (OBB)] in every Soviet republic. While people's commissars of internal affairs in the western republics were responsible for the pacification routine, the OBBs were the primary bodies developing police tactics at the regional level.

The basic law enforcement agency in the countryside was the district police force. One officer, assisted sometimes by a few privates, ran the police station responsible for law and order in several villages.[6] He maintained a network of informers, delivered intelligence to the police section in the district center that processed it, and called in NKVD security troops for larger operations. These security units were the major regular armed force employed against guerrillas. However, during the war, they had to perform many other missions as well: securing the rear of the Red Army from cutoff German units and saboteurs, apprehending deserters, conducting deportations, and guarding prisoners. Until the end of the war, most security troops moved behind the Red Army and took no part in counterinsurgency. In 1944–1945, the total number of security troops available for counterinsurgency was below 70,000, excluding the frontier guards who occasionally participated in such operations.[7] During the war, the security troops were formally organized into divisions of

[5] Document No.105 in Hilda Sabbo, ed. *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 1 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 260.

[6] Every district policeman had to monitor two villages; Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), p. 258. However, because of personnel shortage, policemen often monitored three or five villages.

[7] In 1945, their total number was 167,000 men, and it had dropped to 128,800 by 1946 and to 73,700 by 1947. These numbers embrace all soldiers subordinated to the NKVD and include

about 6,000 soldiers armed only with light weapons. Usually NKVD divisions operated dispersed in companies, platoons, or sections performing independent missions. After the reoccupation of the western borderlands, the security forces found themselves overstretched. These were large areas: Lithuania, a medium-sized western republic, is as big as Ireland, but only 18,497 security troops and frontier guards stayed there by 1947.[8] The government hoped, however, that the political means it planned to use in the framework of counterinsurgency would compensate for the lack of security forces. It underestimated the strength of the opposition in the borderlands and overrated the positive impact of the populist reforms it planned to enforce in the framework of counterinsurgency.

This study presents several key arguments. The first chapter shows how the Soviet counterinsurgency doctrine and its major components – the class principle and the strategic means stemming from it, such as repressions against "class enemies," agrarian reform, deportations, amnesties, and volunteer militia – emerged during the Civil War. This doctrine, modified in response to the Stalinist innovations to communist theories and the increasing totalitarianism of the Soviet state, was later applied to the pacification of the western provinces.

The second, third, and fourth chapters present the historical and social contexts of the confrontation between the nationalist insurgents and the Soviet regime. These chapters compare the rural societies of Eastern Poland and the Baltic region on the eve of World War II, outline the strains they experienced in the interwar period, and discuss how the Soviet and German occupations affected these societies. Each of these chapters presents an overview of anti-Communist resistance groups and their development between 1939 and the early 1950s: their goals, ideology, social basis, strategy; the methods they used to attain their objectives; their strengths and weaknesses; and their relations with the population. The Soviet leaders perceived Russian reality through the prism of class theory. When the Soviet Union incorporated the borderlands in 1939–1940, its government launched a series of populist reforms, seeking to exploit local tensions, win the poor majority over and simultaneously repress the wealthier classes. Although poor farmers benefited from some Soviet reforms, other aspects of the Soviet occupation provoked fear and resentment. Many people in these regions met the German invasion with relief, only to be soon frustrated with the "new order." When the Soviets returned in 1944, a large part of the borderland societies resisted them. Many fought because of ideological reasons, or because they had collaborated with the Germans and feared Soviet reprisals, or because they hated collectivization, but others were

those located within the pre-1939 borders and GULAG camps but exclude the frontier guards. "Spravka o boevoi i operativno-sluzhebnoi deiatel'nosti vnutrennikh voisk [Report on Actions of Security Troops]" (1947). RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 313, l. 8.

[8] Kruglov to Stalin (4 January 1947). Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv RF [The State Archive of the Russian Federation, hereafter cited as GARF], f. 9401, op. 2, d. 168, ll. 4–6. Document

drafted by the guerrillas or found themselves among insurgents accidentally while hiding from German and Soviet conscriptions. The primary target of every major resistance group was not the security forces, but local civilians perceived as Soviet collaborators and, in some cases, ethnic minorities. With time, those who benefited from the Soviet populist policies, those impressed with the might of the Red Army and victims of nationalist terror, as well as opportunists, gave the government a conditional support. The nationalist resistance gradually lost steam after its members realized their struggle was futile and the civilians became tired of endless violence.

The following seven chapters reveal the methods the Soviet government used to suppress insurgency and the problems it had to overcome. Each chapter makes a conclusion about the effectiveness of every such method and its rationality in the given context. Agrarian reform was the most important political measure to attract borderland peasants. However, ideology prevented the Soviets from choosing obvious pacification solutions within the framework of this reform, such as distributing land among peasants as private property, abandoning the collectivization project and building economic relations with the peasantry on free market principles. Instead, Soviet leaders engaged in unprovoked repressions on a class basis and enforced collectivization as a means to transform the conservative "petty bourgeoisie" into a progressive rural proletariat. While the Communists succeeded in splitting the rural society by aggravating existing social tensions and creating new ones, collectivization nullified the benefits provided by the agrarian reform and thus undermined the pacification. This policy left those labeled as kulaks no alternative but to fight or be deported; it also caused many of those whom the communists regarded as class allies join their enemies. By driving apolitical wealthier peasants into a corner, the Soviets created an insurgency of their own imagining.

The commitment of Stalinists to class struggle and the adherence to the principle of collective responsibility ensured the Soviet regime would use mass deportations as a tool of security policy. The Soviets deported those perceived as probable supporters of resistance and other potential troublemakers, but they never planned to implement ethnic cleansing in the borderlands, except for the expulsion of the diaspora nationalities. Given the absence of any constraints in using this method, most deportations were rational means toward attaining the desired goals: they helped secure the territorial integrity of the Soviet state, eliminated the civilian basis of guerrilla support, and forced unmotivated insurgents to surrender.

Peasants constituted the majority of the guerrillas. The class perception of the conflict in the borderlands made the communists assume most peasants could be won for the Soviet cause if their class consciousness was awakened. Social reforms and propaganda targeting peasant guerrillas were to boost their

No. 16 in P. Sokhan'l et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7 (Toronto: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), p. 147.

class consciousness, while generous amnesties allowed unmotivated fighters and army draft evaders to return to civilian life. Amnesties, combined with severe pressure applied on relatives of insurgents, succeeded in draining the pool of resistance manpower.

The Soviet leaders viewed the volunteer militia as a vital element of a strategy that would help them transform counterinsurgency into a class war. A minority of militia fighters joined because of ideological considerations while most did so out of self-interest or because guerrilla terror forced them to side with the state. Militias helped the authorities internalize the conflict; furthermore, they outnumbered the guerrillas and thus undermined the resistance's claim to represent the aspirations of their nations.

Although the primary subject of this book is Soviet strategy, one chapter investigates the tactical tools police used against insurgents: NKVD security units, informant networks, interrogation techniques, intimidation of civilians, and covert operations. Most other states also employed these tools, but the Soviet versions had some unique features stemming from ideology, political culture, previous experience, and the specific borderland social environment. The police showed remarkable flexibility in adapting its tactics to the changing nature of guerrilla war. While initially regular security units carried the brunt of counterinsurgency, later the police increasingly relied on more sophisticated methods. Having created a vast informant network and widely employing converted guerrillas for covert operations, the police shattered the morale of the rebels and provoked the nationalist counterintelligence agencies to launch self-exterminating purges that killed many loyalists, driving a wedge between the resistance and civilians horrified by the chaotic guerrilla terror. Given the unlimited coercive capacity of the Soviet state and its determination to suppress the insurgency at any cost, the ruthless methods used by the police in fact reduced the "collateral damage."

The employment of the church in the pacification of the borderlands was a new component of Soviet strategy. The reversal of the religious policy Soviet leaders had pursued after the Bolshevik Revolution occurred mainly due to geopolitical considerations about the post–World War II status of the borderlands and the East European countries, rather than because of concerns over nationalist resistance. However, once the state began regarding the church as its servant, it left the clergy no option but to accept this role and back government orders with its moral authority or be purged. This policy brought mixed results across the borderlands, although most clerics, prompted by state pressure, Christian ethics, and sincere desire to terminate the civil war among their countrymen, complied with the government's requests and called upon the guerrillas to stop fighting.

As would any other state engaged in counterinsurgency, the Soviet regime had to struggle against random violence committed by its police, local officials and militia. This violence was exacerbated by the savage fight on the Eastern Front, the thirst for revenge against those perceived as Nazi collaborators, and the social revolution imposed from above as a chosen counterinsurgency

method. Despite the centralized administrative system, the government exercised only weak control over security forces and local officials in the rebellious regions. The enormous power these representatives of the authorities enjoyed in the absence of control created a sense of impunity, which led to widespread abuse. The senior party leaders, police, and military commanders realized pacification suffered from arbitrary violence and severely punished hundreds of criminals in police and army uniforms. Yet, the Soviet state fought the abuses inconsistently and could not eliminate them, which drove their victims to the guerrillas.

The last chapter highlights the peculiarities of nationalist resistance and Soviet counterinsurgency in the global context. The nationalists, isolated from external support, faced an enemy with unlimited political will, high morale after defeating Germany and a wider palette of coercive means than the one possessed by most counterinsurgents. In the long run, their struggle was doomed, but in the short run some nationalist groups did attain impressive successes against an enemy that was stronger and more determined than most other regimes in fighting popular resistance. As for Soviet strategy, it stemmed from one center: the Soviet regime had more leverage over local administrations than that exercised by most other governments engaged in pacification, which narrowed the gap between intent and implementation. Quasi-Marxist ideology sometimes imposed irrational strategies, but the Soviet counterinsurgency was more pragmatic and efficient than those conducted by Nazi Germany and most Latin American military dictatorships, while the strategies of democracies also suffered from ideological determinism that hampered pacification. Democracies fighting guerrillas in the Third World also used such methods as mass deportations, intimidation and torture during interrogation; like the Soviets, they were ignorant of the local conditions, and their soldiers also relieved their frustration on civilians in orgies of random violence. Soviet pacification was intended to be more ruthless than the antiguerrilla campaigns conducted by democracies, but it is open to debate whether the Soviets inflicted more victims to civilians than democracies did facing similar challenges.

Most writings on the conflict in the western borderlands explore the resistance movements rather than the Soviet response to them.[9] A handful of works that address Soviet policies focus on a single region or aspect of

[9] Albertas Gerutis, ed., *Lithuania: 700 Years* (New York: Manyland Books, 1969); Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk, *UPA Warfare in Ukraine* (New York: Society of Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army of the United States and Canada, 1972); Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002); M. V. Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii i Velykii Vitchyznianii viinakh* (Kyïv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny, 1994); M. V. Koval', ed., *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii viini* (Kyïv: Instytut Istorii Ukraïny, 1995); Mikola Lebed', *UPA: Ukrains'ka povastans'ka armiia* (Suchasnist', 1987); Taras Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy* (Winnipeg, Canada: Volyn, 1981); Juozas Daumantas, *Fighters for Freedom: Lithuanian Partisans versus the USSR (1944–1947)* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1975); Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 2000); Sergei V. Zubrenkov, "Vooruzhennoe protivodeistvie natsionalistov Sovetskoi vlasti v Litve" (Ph.D. disseration, Moscow State University, 1999); Mart Laar, *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for*

counterinsurgency.[10] Nobody, however, has attempted a study of Soviet policy in the western borderlands as a whole, a study that would illuminate the strategic decision making across all these regions where cultures, allegiances, dominating ideologies, the balance of political forces, and social strains were different, as were the mentalities of local officials tasked to enforce Soviet prescriptions. This is the first attempt to conceptualize the Soviet pacification strategy in this broad context and analyze it as a combination of political, military, and security policies intended to destroy rebellion and advance socialism.

Survival (Washington: Compass Press, 1992); V. P. Iampol'skii, "Kak trezubets vplelsia v svastiku," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal (VIZ)* 2, 1996; N. D. Plotnikov, "Smertonostsy," *VIZ* 3, 1991; V. Zarechnyi, "Al'ians: OUN – SS," *VIZ* 4, 1991; Liudas Truska, "Voina posle voiny," *Rodina* 7, 1997; S. Kuznetsov et al., "Vooruzhennoe natsionalisticheskoe podpol'e v Estonii v 1940kh-1950kh godakh," *Izvestiia TsK KPSS* 8, 1990; B. I. Kaptelov, "OUN na sluzhbe u fashizma," *VIZ* 5, 1991; Aleksandr Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag: OUN, UPA i reshenie "evreiskogo voprosa"* (Moscow: Regnum, 2008).

[10] Jeffrey Burds, "*Agentura*: Soviet Informants' Network in Galicia, 1944–1948," *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 11/1 (1997); Jeffrey Burds, "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944–1948," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 42/2–3–4 (2001); Jeffrey Burds, *The Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944–1948*, Vol. 1505 The Carl Beck Papers, Pittsburgh: Center for Russian & East European Studies, 2001, George Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred: Lithuanian Nationalism during the Triple Occupation, 1939–1953" (Ph.D. dissertion, Boston: Northeastern University, 2003); Ivan Bilas, *Represyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini 1917–1953* (Kyiv: Lybid', 1994); Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005); Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008); Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody (1944–1956)* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m.* (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003); Kristi Kuuk and Toivo Raun, eds., *Soviet Deportations in Estonia: Impact and Legacy.* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2007).

1

Origins of Soviet Counterinsurgency

Chto s popom, chto s kulakom vsia beseda –
V briukho tolstoe shtykom miroeda!
[Don't talk with a priest or a kulak –
Just stab the bloodsuckers' fat bellies with your bayonet!]
Dem'ian Bednyi, "Red Army Song"

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Russia was an agrarian state: 80 percent of its population lived in the countryside. Most arable land in the European part of Russia belonged to the aristocracy, the Crown, and the church, whereas most peasants suffered from land shortage aggravated by the antique organization of peasant labor and backward agricultural methods. After the Bolsheviks took power in November 1917, they promptly addressed this grave problem that had tormented the Russian countryside for half a century. They enforced a radical agrarian reform, which secured the support of peasants throughout the revolution and most of the civil war that followed it. However, in 1919, when the Bolsheviks began confiscating peasant grain in the name of the starving proletariat, they provoked a wave of large rural uprisings, which they doggedly fought until early 1921. This chapter discusses the origins of Soviet counterinsurgency doctrine and its evolution during the interwar period. The lessons the Soviet leaders learned from the experience of the revolution and the civil war, coupled with the security policies developed afterward, laid the foundation for the class-based counterinsurgency model they later applied in the western borderlands. In essence, this model was a combination of populist reforms, social revolution directed from above, and ruthless coercion of those questioning party policies.

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles," wrote Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. They defined the classes according to their relation to the means of production: The bourgeoisie were "owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour," whereas the proletariat were "the class of modern wage labourers who, having no means of production of their own" were "reduced to selling their labour power in order

to live."[1] Peasants also owned means of production – land, horses, and tools – and some hired wage labor. Accordingly, Marx defined them as reactionary petty bourgeoisie striving to enhance their private property but destined to "decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry."[2]

The Bolshevik attitude toward the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, the major owners of the means of production, was straightforward. They were class enemies of the proletariat doomed by social evolution, and their resistance to the natural historical process, active or passive, had to be crushed by any means. The Bolshevik policy toward peasantry, however, was more complex because it was shaped under circumstances that defied their theories. The Bolshevik Party initially oriented itself solely to the urban proletariat that was, according to Marx, the hegemonic class of the forthcoming Communist Revolution. Marxists had no interest in peasants. However, after a series of spontaneous peasant revolts in 1902–1907 against unequal land distribution, Vladimir Lenin appreciated the great potential for rebellion that peasants had accumulated. Given the social composition of Russia, Lenin argued, the proletarian revolution was possible only if supported by peasants. The Bolsheviks embraced peasantry as the "class ally" of the proletariat and sought to exploit its revolutionary potential for their own goals. The Marxist definition of peasants as petty bourgeoisie determined Soviet policy in the countryside, which was erratic, but followed one general trend: When Soviet authority was shaky, the Communists placated the peasants. However, they perceived the pro-peasant policy as a regrettable necessity, a movement away from Marxist theory, and sought to return to the ideologically correct path as soon as possible.

The Bolsheviks divided the peasantry into three groups: *bedniaks* – sharecroppers renting agricultural equipment and draft animals; *seredniaks* – peasants of average prosperity who were self-sufficient farmers producing foodstuff for trade on the free market but hiring no permanent labor; and *kulaks* – large-scale operators who employed full-time laborers. Although these concepts had emerged in peasant society before the Bolshevik Revolution, the definition of each group had been informal, vague, and unimportant and the boundaries between them blurred: Well-to-do peasants with the same amount of property could pass for *kulaks* in a poorer region and *seredniaks* in a wealthier one. Having originated as a pejorative designation for moneylenders and merchants, the term *kulak* expanded at the beginning of the twentieth century to include wealthier farmers. Farmers both respected and envied their prosperous neighbors; they resented *kulaks* but strove to join them, and they despised fellow villagers with a lower economic status than their own. After the Bolshevik Revolution, the consequences of this informal classification of peasantry into three groups suddenly became significant. The party regarded agricultural laborers who owned no means of production, as well as

[1] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: A Signet Classic, 1998), p. 50.
[2] Ibid., p. 63.

bedniaks, as junior partners of the urban proletariat and called for benevolent neutrality toward the rural majority, the *seredniaks,* while treating *kulaks* as class enemies.[3]

The night after the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government, they issued two crucial decrees that won many peasants to their cause. The Decree on Peace let the Russian Army, consisting mainly of peasants, going home after three years of frustrating fight. The Decree on Land ordered the nationalization of all arable land, its confiscation from landlords and the church, and its distribution among peasants in equal parcels per person as a free lease. This agrarian reform proffered immediate and substantial benefits to many at the expense of few. It secured the consent of most peasants and generated vigorous support among the poorest ones. The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples, announced by the Bolsheviks on 15 November 1917, was another important aspect of the revolution. It gave equal rights to all nationalities and thus attracted the ethnic minorities. The Bolsheviks raised a numerous and enthusiastic Red Army from peasant soldiers, who, fed up with the fighting, had recently deserted the fronts of World War I. Those who had acquired land and made a swift and unexpected rise from the bottom to the top of rural society – unimaginable under any other authority – joined the Reds. Ethnic minorities – Estonians, Latvians, Jews, Chinese, Bashkirs, and others whom the Imperial government had treated as second-rate citizens – were among the most reliable of Soviet soldiers.[4]

Although these decrees were brilliant political moves on the part of the Bolsheviks, the subsequent so-called War Communism alienated many peasants. Because market relations were not supposed to exist in a Communist social system, the Bolsheviks attempted to accelerate the pace toward the toilers' paradise in the late 1918 by banning the free market and introducing a barter economy, which turned during the next harvest into confiscation of peasant grain without compensation. This policy caused mass peasant uprisings between 1919 and 1921, the largest being those in eastern Ukraine, Tambov Province, and Siberia, which involved perhaps as many as 100,000 guerrillas supported by millions of peasants.[5] Lenin believed that the Bolsheviks faced the gravest "internal political crisis. … That was the first … time in the history of Soviet Russia that feeling ran against us among large masses of peasants,"[6] and therefore, these rebellions were "far more dangerous than all the Denikins,

[3] Although the flaws of such an artificial classification of peasants are obvious, the use of communist terminology while discussing Soviet decision making is unavoidable because the state conducted its rural policy on the basis of these notions, and the peasants also used them.

[4] Vladimir Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 159, 383.

[5] More than 40,000 peasants fought the communists in western Siberia and about 16,000 in Tambov region in early 1921; V. I. Shishkin, ed., *Za sovety bez kommunistov: Krest'ianskoe vosstanie v Tiumenskoi gubernii* (Novosibirsk: Sibirskii khronograf, 2000), p. 17; V. Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie* (Moscow: Russkii Put', 2005), p. 67.

[6] Lenin, "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution," in *Selected Works,* Vol. 3 (Moscow: Progress Publisher, 1977), p. 663.

Yudenichs, and Kolchaks put together."[7] After the Reds engaged in an extensive, multifaceted counterinsurgency campaign against peasants, they began developing a special doctrine to explain the unanticipated resistance of "class allies" and to offer a solution to the problem.

In their campaigns against peasant rebels, the Bolshevik party adopted some security policies used by the Imperial government, including reliance on secret police, the principle of collective responsibility, and methods stemming from this principle, such as deportations and hostage taking.[8] However, the targets of the Imperial and Bolshevik security policies were different, and while some continuity in counterinsurgency methods is apparent, the differences between them were more significant than were the similarities. Imperial Russia used ethnicity, citizenship, religion, and previous record as criteria of loyalty. It treated foreign residents with greater suspicion than it did Russian citizens. Orthodox believers were more trustworthy than those of other faiths. Slavs were preferable to non-Slavs, and individuals who had belonged originally to suspicious groups but had proven their loyalty to the Russian state by their deeds earned a privileged status. The Bolsheviks distinguished friends from foes on a class basis; ethnicity, citizenship, and religious affiliation played no role in their security decision making.

Surprised by the peasant reaction to War Communism, the Bolsheviks attributed it to the petty bourgeois nature and ignorance of peasants rather than to the flaws of their policies.[9] Ideology, rather than experience, made Bolsheviks regard *kulaks* as the major class enemy after landlords and the urban bourgeoisie had been crushed. *Kulaks* incited *bedniaks* and *seredniaks;* otherwise, they would not fight their benefactors. This explanation made further analysis unnecessary. While the *kulaks* were the backbone of some insurgencies, most peasants who resisted grain confiscations were in fact *seredniaks,* the majority of the rural population. A district party committee in the Volga region reported on the social composition of the insurgents: "The *kulaks* help the

[7] Orlando Figes, *Peasant Russia, Civil War* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 321; Anton Denikin, Nikolai Yudenich, and Alexandr Kolchak were the most important leaders of the Whites.

[8] In the late 1850s, Russia exiled Crimean Tatars to the Ottoman Empire, accusing them of mass treason during the Crimean War. In the 1860s, the government expelled the hostile mountaineers from the Caucasus. During World War I, the Russian government deported about 255,000 Germans and others who shared ethnicity with the enemy powers from western regions into the interior. In 1910, the Russian Army proposed to intern hostages taken from the families of the Kazakh rebels, which would "compel the more moderate elements of the population to return to a peaceful life." Peter Holquist, "To Count, to Extract and to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia," in Ronald G. Suny and Terry Martin, eds., *A State of Nations* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 117–121; Vladimir Auman, ed., *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev v dokumentakh* (Moscow: MIGUP, 1993), pp. 38–40; S. G. Nelipovich, "Repressii protiv poddanykh 'Tsentral'nykh derzhav,'" *VIZ* 6:41, 1996.

[9] Figes, *Peasant Russia*, p. 349; Documents No. 192, 207 in Shishkin, *Za sovety bez kommunistov*, pp. 207, 219.

bandits materially, but themselves take up arms only very rarely," and many of them resented guerrillas who disrupted their business and requisitioned their horses.[10] Yet the top Bolsheviks qualified any peasant rebellion as *kulak* and persuaded themselves that the elimination of *kulaks* would automatically end the insurgency. Leon Trotsky, People's Commissar of Defence, called the insurgency in eastern Ukraine *"anarchic-kulak Makhnovite counterrevolution,"*[11] which was far off the mark. Nestor Makhno, the leader of the rebels, was an anarchist revolutionary who hated *kulaks,* although his definition of *kulak* differed from that of the Bolsheviks. The relentless repression of wealthy farmers in eastern Ukraine made those who would not otherwise resist the Reds join their enemies but hardly affected the Makhnovite resistance, whose social basis consisted of those whom local peasants would qualify as *seredniaks* and *bedniaks*. However, the theoretical dogma made the Communists target the wealthy peasants in every rebellious region. Lenin sent these instructions to the Communist leaders of Penza:

> The revolt by the five *kulak volosts* [districts] must be suppressed with no mercy. … We need to set an example.
>
> 1. You need to hang (hang without fail, so that the *public sees*) *at least* 100 notorious *kulaks,* the rich and the bloodsuckers. …
> 4. Execute the hostages. … This needs to be accomplished in such a way that people for hundreds of miles around will see, tremble, know, and scream out: *let's choke* and strangle those blood-sucking *kulaks*.[12]

These repressions were supposed to target *kulaks,* yet, because their number was small, Lenin declared the entire regions *kulak*. Such orders in fact encouraged the collective punishment barely different from that practiced by the Imperial government. In suppressing the rebellion of the Don Cossacks, Trotsky called on Soviet soldiers "to raze Cossack villages to the ground" regardless of the economic status of their residents and discussed whether to use gas against them.. Mikhail Tukhachevsky, a former tsarist officer unsophisticated in class theory but favored by the Bolsheviks for his loyalty, ruthlessness, and military talent, believed that "in regions where rebellion has firmly taken root, … the struggle must be essentially conducted not against the bands, but against the entire civil population." He did attempt to gas peasants hiding in the forests when he was ordered to suppress an insurgency in Tambov Province.[13]

[10] Figes, *Peasant Russia,* pp. 349, 350.

[11] V. Krasnov and V. Daines, *Neizvestnyi Trotskii: krasnyi Bonapart* (Moscow: OLMA Press, 2000), p. 171; Nestor Makno, *Vospominaniia* (Moscow: Respublika, 1992), pp. 258–269.

[12] Document No. 4 in Diane Koenker and Ronald Bachman, eds., *Revelations from the Russian Archives: Documents in English Translation* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1997), p. 12. Emphases in the original.

[13] Documents Nos. 195 and 204 in V. Danilov and T. Shanin, eds., *"Antonovshchina": krest'ianskoe vosstanie v Tambovskoi gubernii v 1919–1921* (Tambov: Redaktsionno-izdatel'skii otdel, 1994), pp. 177, 185. Moscow suggested that Tukhachevsky use gas with "the utmost

"If war is hell," writes Arno Mayer, "then civil war belongs to hell's deepest and most infernal regions."[14] Revolutionary civil wars provoke the greatest violence, and as Stathis Kalyvas observes, "Rather than the magnitude of fatalities, it is the victimization of non-combatants that best approximates the perception of excessive violence and atrocity in civil wars."[15] By the summer of 1919, Russian society had been brutalized by World War I, two revolutions, the Red and White terrors, and violence committed by various armed groups that belonged neither to the Reds nor to the Whites. The stakes of the opponents were high, ideologies extreme, and the price of human life low. All major participants of the civil war committed crimes against civilians. White terror matched the Red one if the violence perpetrated by anti-Soviet Cossacks is taken into account, and the peasants resisting the Reds and the Whites committed equally gruesome atrocities against their enemies. The top Bolshevik leaders encouraged "merciless reprisals" and sweeping preventive repressions to intimidate civilians. Soviet security forces routinely burned entire villages in rebellious regions, machine-gunned rioting crowds, and executed 10 peasants for every Communist killed in riots.[16] If the Reds had to retreat, they often killed all persons they had arrested, sometimes to the hundreds.[17] Soviet officials in the Tambov Region complained that the Reds unleashed terror that was "beyond human imagination and resembles medieval times."[18]

The principle of collective responsibility adopted by the Bolsheviks dictated them to take hostages from the families of insurgents or, alternatively, "class enemies" to facilitate the surrender of guerrillas and to prevent attacks on Soviet administrators and the destruction of railway tracks, bridges, and telegraph lines. This became a standard Bolshevik practice. A typical order written by Tukhachevsky and Antonov-Ovseenko, the two most important Soviet commanders in the Tambov region, warned civilians:

> 2. In villages that hide weapons, the Political Commission of the district … will execute hostages if the weapons are not surrendered.

caution." Because of shortage of gas shells, only a few dozen were fired and apparently did no harm to the rebels. Krasnov and Daines, *Neizvestnyi Trotskii*, p. 161.

[14] Arno Mayer, *The Furies: Violence and Terror in the French and Russian Revolutions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 323.

[15] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 54.

[16] P. A. Aptekar', "Krest'ianskaia voina," *VIZ* 1:50–55, 1993; P. A. Aptekar', "Krest'ianskaia voina," *VIZ* 2:66, 1993; Document Nos. 347 and 503 in Alexandr N. Iakovlev, ed., *Sibirskaia Vandeia,* Vol. 1 (Moscow: International Fund *"Demokratiia,"* 2000), pp. 236, 324; P. A. Novikov, "Povstancheskoe dvizhenie v Irkutskoi gubernii (1920–1921)," *Belaia gvardiia* 6:67, 2002; Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War*, pp. 346, 347; Figes, *Peasant Russia,* p. 351; Document No.125 in Shishkin, *Za sovety bez kommunistov*, p. 158; Document No. 213 in Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* p. 189.

[17] Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War*, p. 344.

[18] Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie*, p. 18.

3. If hidden weapons are found, the oldest working family member present will be summarily executed.
4. The family in whose house a bandit is hiding is to be arrested and exiled from the province, and the oldest in the family will be summarily executed.
5. Families which provide sanctuary to bandit family members or who hide the property of the latter will themselves be regarded as bandit families, and the oldest working member of such a family will be summarily executed.[19]

Another order issued by these commanders specified the details of the intimidating procedure:

Upon arrival, [a Red unit] surrounds the district and takes between 60 and 100 of the most prominent [peasants] as hostages. … The residents have two hours to surrender any bandits, weapons and bandit families. … If the residents do not surrender the bandits and weapons within two hours, … the hostages are publicly executed, after which new hostages are taken and a second request to surrender the bandits and weapons is made. … In case of defiance, new executions are carried out, etc.[20]

Within three weeks of the issuing of these orders, the Bolsheviks took 3,430 hostages. In his "Instructions on the Eradication of Banditry," Tukhachevsky wrote: "The morale of the bandits can be broken only if they know suppression will be conducted consistently and with cruel persistency. … Once a threat has been made, it should be fulfilled even if it means cruelty."[21] His subordinates followed the instructions. One of them reported: "Women were taken hostages along with men and also were executed. This method yielded good results."[22] In some villages, the Bolsheviks arrested all males, and in Parevka Village they shot 80 hostages, perhaps most of its adult population.[23] Hostage taking was a far harsher measure than the attempt to gas those hiding in the forests. After all, most of the latter were guerrillas, whereas most hostages were civilians. The Soviet officials reported that public executions of hostages "made an astounding impression on the population,"[24] and thousands of deserters and guerrillas subsequently surrendered.[25] Judging from the increasing use of this draconian measure, Bolsheviks found it effective when the superiority of their forces in the rebellious regions was overwhelming, and it was such after they had defeated the Whites in November 1920. If the Bolsheviks knew that members of certain families were among the guerrillas, they took hostages from these families, regardless of their economic status. However, if the authorities had no information as to which households supported the guerrillas, they repressed predominantly "class enemies," whatever

[19] Document No.198 in Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* p. 179.
[20] Document No. 210 in Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* p. 188.
[21] M. Tukhachevsky, "Bor'ba s kontrrevoliutsionnymi vosstaniiami," in Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* pp. 127, 241.
[22] Document Nos.176 and 212 in Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* pp. 163, 188.
[23] Documents Nos.182 and 206 in Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* pp. 168, 186.
[24] Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* p. 127.
[25] Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War,* p. 387.

their attitude toward the guerrillas, and they continued to refer to peasant insurgencies as *kulak,* regardless of their actual social composition. Thus, although in practice the Bolsheviks tacitly admitted that their class theory did not reflect reality, they nonetheless used it to explain peasant resistance and to justify sweeping repressions in rebellious regions.

Another form of hostage taking was the mass deportation from rebellious regions. The Reds first resorted to deportations in 1918, when they uprooted three Cossack villages in the North Caucasus and distributed the lands of the deported Cossacks among ethnic minorities and outsider loyalists.[26] These deportations resembled Imperial colonial practices: The government removed a hostile population and replaced it with people expected to strengthen its authority, undermining the resistance of the unfriendly majority surrounding the loyal enclaves. During the suppression of the Tambov uprising, the Reds used deportations more systematically. They took a quasi-census of the population in rebellious villages and then incarcerated in concentration camps families whose members were absent, along with the relatives of "notorious thieves, horse-lifters, incorrigible bandits and all vicious elements."[27] These families stayed in the camps for two weeks. If the fugitives failed to report during this period, their relatives were deported out of the province and sentenced to forced labor, and their property was confiscated and passed to loyalists in order to fuel the conflict among peasants. However, those fugitives who did report were granted immunity from the death penalty, and their families were released.[28] The Reds viewed deportations as a relatively mild punishment intended to destroy the civilian infrastructure of the insurgents while sparing "ignorant class allies," giving them a chance to integrate into proletarian society after their class consciousness has been awakened. By August 1921, the Bolsheviks had incarcerated or exiled 100,000 people, half of them guerrilla relatives taken hostage.[29] Deportations were a primary means of suppressing the Tambov rebellion, and Tukhachevsky listed them among the leading strategies of counterinsurgency.

All these repressions were sanctioned by top Bolshevik leaders, including Lenin.[30] However, after they gave their punitive units carte blanche in conducting mass repressions, the Red terror became too general to have a class orientation and often went out of control. Intoxicated with power, security troops and grain-collecting teams – consisting of poor peasants, factory workers, adventurers, shady characters of all sorts, and ethnic minorities who suddenly found themselves in favor with the authorities – routinely killed prisoners, raped women, and robbed peasants regardless of their economic status; they

[26] N. Bugai and A. Kotsonis, eds., *"Obiazat' NKVD vyselit' grekov"* (Moscow: INSAN, 1999), p. 23; Holquist, "To Count, to Extract and to Exterminate," pp. 127, 131.
[27] Aptekar', "Krest'ianskaia voina," *VIZ* 1:53–54, 1993.
[28] Document No. 177 in Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* p. 165.
[29] Holquist, "To Count, to Extract and to Exterminate," p. 131.
[30] Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War*, p. 386.

also engaged in drunken brawls and extracted bribes.[31] The Irkutsk revolutionaries observed that some Soviet units behaved "like gangs of rowdy cutthroats." Rural Bolsheviks often had "extremely low moral standards and sometimes criminal records. … They are a bunch of privileged individuals pursuing selfish interests." Officials in Turkestan wrote that "crimes committed by Red Guard units provoked the growth of *basmachi* resistance."[32] In Tambov Province, *Cheka* reported "systematic plunder by our troops,"[33] while a Red staff officer painted a gloomy picture of Soviet practice and its consequences:

> Instead of cleansing villages of bandits, our units … cleansed them of all property. … Nobody investigates who is right and who is wrong. … During procurements of forage (i.e., looting), some peasants who had been loyal to us lost all their property and homes because they were burned down. They found themselves in a hopeless situation. They want to avenge the loss of their property and see no alternative to joining the bandits. … [As] a result [guerrilla] bands mushroom. … [Red] commanders act like lunatics who, on seeing that their house has caught fire, attempt to extinguish it with kerosene.[34]

All these actions violated government policies and elevated the level of violence far above what the top counterinsurgents believed to be rational. These crimes undermined the moral standards of Soviet soldiers, ruined the prestige of the authorities, and drove peasants to support the insurgents even if they did not share their ideals. The Bolshevik leaders, being briefed regularly by *Cheka,* knew about the abuses but regarded them as an inevitable by-product of the revolution caused by the petty bourgeois mentality of the masses and the incompetence of local authorities. They attempted to reduce random violence mainly by appealing to "the revolutionary consciousness" of the Soviet forces. Some commissars made more serious efforts, ordering the summary execution of marauders and rapists.[35] However, the government realized the scope of the damage random violence inflicted on its policy only belatedly, and even then, its efforts to curb it were minimal and ineffective. The Communist leaders learned remarkably little from this experience and developed no procedures to prevent similar crimes in the future.

[31] Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie*, pp. 19, 24, 25; Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War*, pp. 305–309, 371; Document Nos. 66 and 87 in Shishkin, *Za sovety bez kommunistov*, pp. 94, 113.

[32] Novikov, "Povstancheskoe dvizhenie," p. 66; N. E. Eliseeva, "S. S. Kamenev o bor'be s basmachestvom," *VIZ* 5:41, 1995. *Basmachi* were Islamic anti-Bolshevik insurgents in Central Asia.

[33] Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War,* p. 371. *Cheka* was the abbreviation for the Extraordinary Commission for the Fight against Counterrevolution and Sabotage, the Bolshevik secret police in 1918–1922.

[34] Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie*, p. 42.

[35] Document Nos. 273 and 296 in Iakovlev, *Sibirskaia Vandeia*, Vol. 1, pp. 185, 204; Document Nos. 209 and 278 in Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* pp. 187, 236.

The adherence to class theory made the Bolsheviks ignore aspects of the tensions that did not fit this framework. They were internationalist, and they believed in universal laws of social development. Despite the fact that in some conflicts between the Soviet regime and its peasant opponents, such as the rebellions in the North Caucasus and Central Asia, the ethnic factor dominated over the class one, Bolsheviks explained this "aberration" as caused by the low class consciousness of the masses and instigation by local elites. Although the Soviet leaders did make an effort to take local peculiarities into account, they typically underestimated the ethnic or cultural factors of the unrest and followed the universal counterinsurgency model wherever they faced a rebellion.

The Bolsheviks also underrated the religious aspect of the civil war. Most people in Russia were religious. The Bolshevik policy toward religion stemmed from Marxist atheism and intolerance to any competitive authority. They perceived the clergy as parasites living at the expense of toilers and declared religion the "opium" that capitalist governments used to fool their subjects to make subjugation easier. The Bolsheviks separated the church from the state, confiscated church property, secularized the schools, introduced civil marriage and divorce, confiscated gold and silver ritual items to raise funds for the import of grain during the famine of 1920–1921, and threw relics out of the churches. These policies targeted equally all denominations. Although the Russian Orthodox Church traditionally had submitted to secular power regardless of its nature, Bolshevik radicalism caused the rebellion of Orthodox Patriarch Tikhon, who refused to recognize the godless regime, condemned the "satanic persecution" of the church, and called believers to ignore the Soviet laws that contradicted Christian ethics, asking people to defend the church even if that meant martyrdom.[36] During the civil war, the top Orthodox hierarchs appealed for reconciliation of the warring parties and tried to stay away from politics, yet clergy of all denominations overwhelmingly sympathized with the counterrevolutionaries. Priests held considerable moral authority, and their calls to defend the church and the outrage over sacrileges committed by the atheist government motivated many peasants to attack its representatives or to at least withhold support from the Bolsheviks even though they had received land from them. In 1918–1919, there were 1,414 clashes between the authorities and church defenders resulting in loss of life. These clashes occurred mainly in the countryside.[37] The Bolshevik response was predictable: They arrested Tikhon, and many other priests fell victim to the Red terror or to random violence by the Red Army. During the suppression of insurgency in Siberia, the Bolsheviks reportedly executed over 100 clerics in the Tobol'sk Diocese alone.[38] The religious aspect of the conflict between

[36] D. L. Golinkov, *Krushenie antisovetskogo podpol'ia v SSSR*, Vol. 2 (Moscow: Politizdat, 1980), p. 23.
[37] Golinkov, *Krushenie antisovetskogo podpol'ia*, Vol. 2, p. 25.
[38] Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War*, p. 382.

peasants and the Soviet government was particularly important in Islamic regions, where the clergy had no tradition of submission to secular power and was more militant than its Christian counterparts, and most peasants were devout believers. Outrage over Red atheists was a primary motivation for the *basmachi* rebellion. However, the Bolsheviks made no effort to adjust their religious policy to local culture, nor did they use clerics as mediators in the fight against peasant rebellions. The police of Imperial Russia had expected the clerics to denounce all forms of dissent and to inform it about subversive sentiments in their parishes, even if they had obtained the information through the confessional.[39] Father Georgii Gapon was the most notorious example of a paid police agent in a cassock, but many other priests also served the police. In contrast, the Bolsheviks made no attempt to use the clergy for pacification or even legitimization of their regime. They perceived it as a class enemy and saw no alternative to relentless repression.

Despite the numerous flaws of Bolshevik counterinsurgency, the irrational actions dictated by ideology, and the gaps between theory and implementation, the Communists continued to reap the political benefits of the agrarian reform and social revolution they brought to the countryside.[40] Most anti-Bolshevik guerrillas supported the October Revolution but "challenged the Communist regime's claim to legitimacy as the custodians of that revolution."[41] The rebellious peasant repeatedly claimed: "We are not against the Soviet authority of peasants and workers because we are quite convinced that the Soviet authority is the only one that defends the interests of toilers. … We are against the Communists who took from us even the last kernel and now rot it [the grain] in barns." Insurgents in Tambov region called themselves revolutionaries, even if "the vectors of spontaneous peasant revolutionary actions and transforming Bolshevik revolutionary actions pointed apart."[42] The shared desire for change facilitated compromise in the face of danger. The attitude of peasants toward the Reds depended on the ratio of benefits provided by the Bolshevik government to its other policies the peasants resented. With some exceptions, such as the Cossacks, who had lost their privileges during the Revolution, peasants regarded the Reds as a lesser evil than the Whites, worrying, with good reason, that the Whites would take from them the land that they had received from the Bolsheviks. Most rebels in eastern Ukraine, Tambov Province, and Siberia were ready to negotiate with the Reds on certain conditions but ruled out compromise with the Whites. When the White Volunteer Army overran eastern Ukraine in August 1919, the Makhnovites resolutely sided with the Bolsheviks, as did Siberian peasants at the approach of the White forces

[39] Orladno Figes, *A People's Tragedy* (New York: Viking, 1996), p. 63.

[40] Figes, *Peasant Russia,* pp. 322, 329.

[41] Eric Landis, "Waiting for Makhno: Legitimacy and Context in a Russian Peasant War," *Past and Present* 183:219, 2004.

[42] Document Nos. 121 and 150 in Shishkin, *Za sovety bez kommunistov*, pp. 145, 169; Landis, "Waiting for Makhno," pp. 202, 210, 218; Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* p. 66; Danilov and Shanin, *"Antonovshchina,"* p. 6.

led by Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak.[43] In both cases, these guerrillas significantly weakened the counterrevolutionaries, thus indirectly strengthening the Reds. The Decree on Land and the legislation stemming from class theory usually outweighed in peasants' minds the possible consequences of Whites' victory.[44]

Keeping this in mind, the Bolsheviks prudently gave the "class allies" who for whatever reason found themselves among their enemies an opportunity to defect. The White officers could expect no mercy. After the Reds took Crimea in 1920, they massacred thousands of officers taken prisoner.[45] However, the commissars consistently tried to persuade peasants serving the enemy to switch sides. The Bolsheviks usually granted amnesties to "socially proximate" (*sotsial'no blizkie*) enemy fighters willing to desert. On 1 April 1919, Trotsky ordered Soviet commanders:

> Meet defectors as friends, as persons liberated from the Kolchak yoke. … Do not execute enemy soldiers who surrendered or were taken prisoner. Always remember that some Kolchak soldiers were deceived, while others were forced to fight. … Unsanctioned executions of defectors and enemies taken prisoner will be mercilessly punished according to martial law. Leave it to Kolchak butchers to shoot POWs. The army of workers and peasants turns remorseful enemies into friends.[46]

The Bolsheviks pardoned tens of thousands of peasant guerrillas during the civil war. Simultaneously, they repressed those who continued resisting after amnesties had been granted, demonstrating that death was the only alternative to surrender. A decree of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee was a typical Soviet amnesty offer:

1. All insurgents who have fought against Soviet power and are in hiding, armed or unarmed, must report to the regional military conscription offices and declare their desire to atone for their guilt by departing to the front.
2. The regional military conscription offices must immediately enlist them in the Red Army, providing them and their families with all allowances and benefits to which Soviet soldiers are entitled. …
5. Those who fail to report within a month of the date of this announcement will be regarded as enemies of the people; their property will be confiscated and they will suffer severe punishment according to the revolutionary law.[47]

This combination of severe repressions and generous amnesties depleted the forces of the insurgents. For instance, after the Soviet government declared amnesty to Siberian insurgents in November 1920, a guerrilla unit

[43] Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War,* p. 343.
[44] Landis, "Waiting for Makhno," p. 209.
[45] Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War,* p. 346.
[46] Krasnov and Daines, *Neizvestnyi Trotskii*, pp. 183, 184.
[47] Document No. 44 in Iakovlev, *Sibirskaia Vandeia*, Vol. 1, p. 56.

commanded by D. Donskoi in Irkutsk Province dwindled from 600 to 120 within three months.[48] During the suppression of the rebellion in Tambov Province, 5,584 guerrillas accepted amnesty, including six "regiment" commanders, that is, about one-third of the armed insurgents.[49] For pragmatic considerations, the Bolsheviks sometimes pardoned even prominent anti-Soviet guerrilla leaders, such as Viktor Belash, Makhno's chief of staff; Lev Zadov, head of Makhno's counterintelligence service; Petr Arshinov, head of the propaganda section of Makhno's army; Alexei Chubenko, major field commander of the Makhnovites and Makhno's aide; Iurii Tiutiunnik, deputy commander of the armed forces of the Ukrainian People's Republic,[50] Grigorii Rogov, the anarchist leader of the rebellion in Barnaul Province; and two top *basmachi* commanders in Turkestan, Madamin-bek and Dzhany-bek, whose units were duly enlisted in the Red Army. In 1922, 137 *kurbashis,* the lower-ranked *basmachi* commanders, switched sides.[51] The government usually honored its promises to pardon rank and file but often broke those given to rebel leaders, settling scores when insurgencies disintegrated. The commanders who assessed the lessons of the counterinsurgency emphasized that amnesties were an "important political measure" that split guerrilla units.[52]

The Bolsheviks viewed worker and peasant militia as a primary means of counterinsurgency that helped fuel the class conflict. Their reliance on a people's militia was a natural outcome of revolutionary ideology, but its employment brought mixed results. In 1918, the Soviet administration of Turkestan organized the Peasant Army of Fergana, arming Russian farmers for self-defense against Islamic guerrillas. The government was, however, too weak to control the militia, which plundered the Moslem population and compromised the authorities. Furthermore, once the Bolsheviks started grain requisitions in the summer of 1919, the militia joined the Islamic guerrillas, and the Red Army had to fight them for the next six months.[53] In contrast, the Special Task Force (*chasti osobogo naznacheniia*), with a core of *Cheka* security troops and a militia of workers, poor farmers, and demobilized Soviet soldiers, became fundamental to the suppression of rural rebellions. First raised in 1919, the Special Task Force included 39,673 security troops and 323,372 militiamen

[48] Novikov, "Povstancheskoe dvizhenie," p. 69.

[49] At the peak of the rebellion, by March 1921, rebels had about 17,600 men. Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie*, pp. 67, 85, 133, 195.

[50] V. Danilov and T. Shanin, eds., *Nestor Makno. Krest'ianskoe dvizhenie na Ukraine* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2006), pp. 886, 887, 896, 920. The Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed in 1917 by an alliance of leftist parties. Its government was overthrown by the Red Army in 1920 and went into exile.

[51] Golinkov, *Krushenie antisovetskogo podpol'ia,* Vol. 1, p. 332, Vol. 2, pp.141, 191, 194; Iakovlev, *Sibirskaia Vandeia*, Vol. 1, p. 35.

[52] B. Leonidov, "Eserobanditizm v Tambovskoi gubernii i bor'ba s nim," in Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* p. 347.

[53] Golinkov, *Krushenie antisovetskogo podpol'ia,* Vol. 1, pp. 327–331.

by December 1921.[54] Bolsheviks used militias extensively, despite their poor training and tendency to commit plunder, because they found them instrumental for stirring up class confrontation. The experience taught them that militias could effectively serve their goals if regular security agencies and the party agencies closely supervised them.

During the civil war, *Cheka* launched several impressive covert operations targeting the leaders of resistance. Among these were the assassination of General Alexandr Dutov, the commander of the Orenburg Cossacks, killed by a *Cheka* agent who had infiltrated into his closest circle, and the elimination of several top rebel commanders in Tambov Province. In the latter incident, they sent the band of Grigorii Kotovskii, one of the most daring and imaginative Red commanders, to pose as anti-Soviet Don Cossacks. Kotovskii's men had to earn the trust of the last remaining rebel force consisting of two "regiments" commanded by Ivan Matkiukhin and destroy them in a sudden strike. As soon as they made contact, Kotovskii's band proposed to celebrate the unification of their forces, while Kotovskii and his commanders went to meet the leaders of the rebels. The meeting ended with a shootout across the table; Matkiukhin and his commanders were riddled with bullets, while Kotovskii's band rounded up the drunken guerrillas and thus effectively eliminated the remnants of the resistance.[55]

The Red Army fought peasant revolts in 1919–1920 with great effort, suppressing many of them only to discover several new ones had arisen in other provinces. When the Bolsheviks found their military victories in some regions could not quash the endless peasant rebellions all over Russia, they decided to postpone the establishment of an egalitarian classless system and made a major strategic reverse. In March 1921, they abandoned War Communism in favor of the New Economic Policy (NEP), which replaced the confiscations of grain with a tax in kind and restored the free marketing of agricultural products. This switch of policy convinced a critical mass of rebels that resistance was no longer necessary, and as a result, the insurgency lost steam. Tukhachevsky, who never failed to emphasize the effectiveness of his own actions, admitted it was mainly this political decision that ended the peasant resistance.[56]

By the end of the civil war, the Bolsheviks had established their counterinsurgency doctrine. What were its major postulates? The proletarian paradise is such an attractive, accessible, and scientifically substantiated goal that it justifies any means to accelerate the "triumphal march of Soviet power" and ruthlessly crush any obstacle on the way toward this goal. Class enemies – aristocracy, bourgeoisie, clergy, and *kulaks* – must either be coerced into

[54] Leonid D. Grenkevich, *The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941–1944* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 63, 64; A. M. Prokhorov, ed., *Grazhdanskaia voina i interventsiia v SSSR* (Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1983), pp. 56, 649.

[55] Landis, "Waiting for Makhno," pp. 204–206.

[56] Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* p. 237. See also Leonidov, "Eserobanditizm v Tambovskoi gubernii i bor'ba s nim," in Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* p. 321.

cooperation with the authorities or destroyed but *bedniaks* and *seredniaks* should be won over by political means. The primary means among these is agrarian reform, intended to attract the peasant majority by bestowing on it substantial benefits. Anti-Communist peasant resistance is caused by ignorance and absence of class consciousness; it should be quelled by a combination of stick and carrot, but political solutions must prevail over military ones. Only the incorrigible among the rebellious class allies should be eliminated; the rest should be converted to the Bolshevik cause. Collective punishment is acceptable to defeat peasant uprisings, but deportations out of the rebellious regions are preferable to more drastic actions. Propaganda targeting class allies among anti-Communist guerrillas will undermine their morale, and generous amnesties offered by the Reds will drain their manpower. Along with the police and army units, citizen militia is a vital component of the counterinsurgency force because it stirs class conflict and thus helps peasants to develop class consciousness. This doctrine has to be applied universally, regardless of variations of ethnicity, culture, and religion.

The counterinsurgency ended with the suppression of the *basmachi* remnants in 1931. Subsequent upheavals, such as the continuous unrest in the North Caucasus, did not assume the scale of a people's war and were suppressed mainly by police efforts. These events made no impact on the counterinsurgency doctrine. However, the rapid modernization of the Soviet state and its transition from authoritarianism to totalitarianism in the 1930s further developed the security strategies and shaped the mentality of the party leaders and police officers who dealt with security problems.

The Bolshevik leaders regarded the NEP as a temporary rather than a permanent solution because it did not allow them to regulate the economy as they wished; furthermore, they still faced a thorny problem, the presence of a large "petty bourgeois" majority that gladly embraced the market economy and, given a free hand, could slow the progress of communism or even reverse the Revolution. The decision to launch industrialization in 1928 prompted Joseph Stalin, who had replaced Lenin as the head of the Soviet state, to search for a "final solution" to the peasant problem. Seeking to rationalize peasant labor and gain control over agricultural production so as to fund industry, the Soviet Communists arrived at the idea of collectivization, which was intended to transform the "petty bourgeoisie" into an advanced class, a rural proletariat owning a minimum of property and working at large mechanized "grain factories." In order to suppress resistance to collectivization, the party decided to eliminate the *kulaks,* the "last remaining capitalist class."

Moshe Lewin notes that "the notion of *kulak* meant, in any particular period, different things among the Bolshevik leaders themselves." In March 1929, the government issued a law that defined several criteria, classifying as a *kulak* a peasant who fit any of them.[57] *Kulaks* were those who hired labor; owned a rural "industrial enterprise," such as a mill; hired out complex

[57] Moshe Lewin, "Who Was the Soviet Kulak?" *Soviet Studies* 18(2):191, 196, 1966.

agricultural machines driven by an engine; had family members engaged in commerce; and/or had other sources of income not derived from labor. These criteria were barely more precise than the earlier folk taxonomy. In fact, the law deliberately left them vague so that they could embrace a much larger part of rural society than those whom the peasants themselves regarded as *kulaks*. This was done in order to give local administrators more leverage in enforcing the party line. For example, since most *seredniaks* hired seasonal labor, those unwilling to join the collective farms could be qualified as *kulaks* and suffer the consequences. The state never formalized the qualifications for *seredniaks* or *bedniaks,* but its policy toward any peasant depended on his or her status, which each region and every administrator defined in different ways.

The collectivization sparked many chaotic riots but no organized armed resistance. It was the local police and party activists who fought these riots, and since the authorities encountered no strong opposition, they saw no need for sophisticated pacification methods and suppressed the resistance in an unimaginative and straightforward fashion, mainly by force alone, although they did again attempt to split the peasant society along class lines, and they partially succeeded in rallying the poor against the "*kulaks*." The collectivization campaign brought no innovations into the Soviet counterinsurgency model except that deportations moved to the forefront of the pacification methods. The scale of these deportations far exceeded those conducted during the civil war. In 1930–1933, the Communists exiled about 3.6 million "*kulaks*" and anyone else who resisted collectivization.[58] These deportations were so sweeping because the government exiled the wealthier peasants not for actual resistance but on a class basis. Since the state had only limited funds to subsidize collectivization, its leaders believed that the most rational way to acquire the necessary assets would be to confiscate the best private farms and use them as the foundation for the collective farms. This idea presumed outright robbery and exile of the wealthier peasants covered with rhetoric about *kulaks'* sabotage of collectivization. At that time, peasants were deported as individuals – the authorities never uprooted entire villages. However, after collectivization, the deportations became the primary Soviet pacification tool; furthermore, the deportations of "*kulaks*" paved the way for the indiscriminate exile of ethnic groups.

The evolution of their ethnic policies produced repercussions in the Bolsheviks' approach to security problems. Most Bolshevik leaders, belonging to the generation that had launched the Revolution, were internationalist. Ethnicity played no role in the blacklisting of those whom the government deported during the civil war or collectivization. However, in the mid-1930s, the radical change of strategy from the expectation of a world revolution to the building of communism in one country, the replacement of proletarian internationalism with Soviet nationalism as official ideology, the shift from "indigenization" that benefited ethnic minorities to the glorification of Russians

[58] A. N. Dugin, ed., *Neizvestnyi GULAG* (Moscow: Nauka, 1999), p. 101.

as "first among equals,"[59] and the intensifying xenophobia and paranoia about enemy conspiracies resulted in disproportionate repressions against diaspora nationalities. The government started to cleanse frontier regions of these nationalities. In 1935–1939, it moved some Germans, Poles, Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Khemshins, Gypsies, and Kurds from frontier regions to the interior. The resettlement of all Koreans from the Far East to Central Asia in October 1937 initiated the deportations of entire ethnic groups. Simultaneously, the Soviet regime began expelling diaspora nationalities from the Soviet Union. In 1937–1938, it compelled thousands of Koreans, Iranians, and Chinese who had no Soviet citizenship to "repatriate."[60] By 1935, the Soviet government had adopted almost all loyalty criteria used by Imperial Russia except religion – citizenship, ethnicity, and previous record – to which it added class affiliation. It gained much experience in conducting mass deportations, which became a standard tool of security policy. The deportation orders show that forced migrations were preemptive measures aimed at strengthening the frontier regions and preventing separatism and espionage. Unlike the deportation of "*kulaks*," the deportations of diaspora nationalities had no punitive intent. The state moved most deportees not to Siberia but to the underdeveloped regions of Kazakhstan and Central Asia with fertile lands and a mild climate. Ideally, the deportations had to be as painless as possible, and the property deportees had left behind was to be restored at their new places of residence.[61] However, the deportations were organized well only in aspects the government regarded as important: the swift uprooting and transfer to the interior of blacklisted people. Soviet leaders placed a low priority on other aspects of the deportations and did not monitor the implementation of their orders regarding the settling of the exiles. The Soviet state machine did not work without permanent control from above, and the deportees suffered horrendous privations because local authorities ordered to settle them had neither the resources nor the desire to help them. Although the police repeatedly informed the top officials in Moscow about the "criminal indifference" of local administrators to the deportees, the Soviet leaders did little to alleviate their ongoing hardship.[62]

During the interwar period, the Soviet secret police further refined its skill in covert operations targeting leaders of the political opposition. General Alexandr Kutepov, chair of the Russian Military Union; his successor, General Evgenii Miller; Evhen Konovalets, head of the Ukrainian Military Organization; Andrés Nin, leader of the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification in Spain; and Leon Trotsky were just the most significant personalities on the

[59] Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp. 452, 453.

[60] Alexandr Iakovlev, ed., *Stalinskie deportatsii* (Moscow: Materik, 2005), pp. 45–104.

[61] Document Nos. 1.15 and 1.33, in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii*, pp. 61, 63, 90, 91.

[62] Document Nos. 1.16, 1.20, 1.36, 1.37, and 1.38 in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii*, pp. 65, 67, 68, 95, 96.

long list of political opponents killed by Soviet agents.[63] In order to hit the "head of the snake," the secret police devised sophisticated plots seeking to either lure the leaders of political opposition into the Soviet Union or assassinate them. Operation Trust was the most successful plot hatched by the Soviet secret police. It created the bogus Monarchist Union of Central Russia that in 1921–1926 monitored the actions of émigré anti-Soviet organizations and thus finally lured Boris Savinkov, leader of the militant émigré opposition, along with several other important anti-Communists, into the Soviet Union and arrested them. The skill in covert operations of this sort would prove indispensable in future counterinsurgency campaigns.

Soviet leaders continued to regard the crusade against religion as an aspect of security policy. They assumed religion would gradually dwindle during the cultural revolution. Meanwhile, they sought to marginalize the church and facilitate the "inevitable historical process." The Russian Orthodox Church, leaderless after the government forbade election of a new Patriarch following the death of Tikhon in 1925, was ridiculed by the Militant Godless League and weakened by severe fiscal pressure, repressions, and the schismatic Renovation religious movement sponsored by the state. In 1927, the faltering church was forced to officially recognize "the Soviet Union as our civil fatherland whose joys and successes are our joys and successes and whose misfortunes are our misfortunes."[64] Other denominations followed suit. Hundreds of priests fell victim to Communist repressions, and the government harassed, rather than persecuted, ordinary believers. Churches, mosques, synagogues, and Buddhist temples continued to operate in the Soviet Union, but their number decreased steadily, and so did the number of clergy. By April 1936, only 36.2 percent of church buildings in Ukraine and 21.9 percent of those in Belorussia that had existed before 1917 remained legally open; of them, only a quarter of Ukrainian and half of Belorussian churches operated.[65] Between 1917 and 1939, the number of bishops in the Russian Orthodox Church fell from 163 to 7, and the number of priests was reduced from 50,000 to only a few hundred. All the 1,000 monasteries and 60 seminaries were shut down.[66] The Soviet Union had no official relations with the Vatican. Since until the mid-1930s the Soviet government considered Catholic Poland its primary potential enemy, it viewed the Catholic Church as an agent of Western imperialism and almost totally destroyed it in the Soviet Union. Only two Catholic churches continued to operate there: one in Moscow and another in Leningrad. The cultural revolution, backed by police pressure against the church, began to bear fruit among younger Soviets. A poll conducted in 1937 in Ukraine showed that

[63] Andrew Christopher and Oleg Gordievsky, *KGB: The Inside Story of Its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990), pp. 115–133.

[64] Harvey Fireside, *Icon and Swastika: The Russian Orthodox Church under the Nazi and Soviet Control* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 32.

[65] Edward Roslov, *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy and Revolution, 1905–1946* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), p. 185.

[66] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika*, p. 166.

57 percent of Ukrainians between 16 and 29 years of age were atheist.[67] On the eve of World War II, the church in the Soviet Union seemed on the verge of extinction.

In 1936, Stalin launched the Great Purges that at first targeted his rivals and their supporters in the Communist party but evolved into general terror. The campaign's goal was to consolidate the transformation of the Soviet system from a single-party dictatorship into a personal dictatorship and eliminate any potential challenge it could face. Beginning with 1930, Stalin advanced the theory that class conflict would intensify in socialist society. This theoretical twist justified repressions during collectivization and later the Great Terror as a struggle against subversive remnants of the "exploiter classes," but it also had grave repercussions on the security strategy of the Soviet state. Earlier Marxists had argued that classes doomed by social evolution would vanish through the gradual erosion of class borders. The new theory presumed those classes had to be physically destroyed, whatever the attitude of individual members toward the Soviet regime. This theory, coupled with public hysteria about the "enemy at the gates," was skillfully incited and orchestrated from above, making it easy for Stalin to eliminate all potential dissent. Those suspect included bureaucrats questioning the wisdom of the party line, senior military officers grumbling about the dominance of ignorant commissars, intellectuals with their loose tongues, and those whose past was marred by membership in non-Bolshevik parties or even apolitical public and professional associations. The goal of the purge was attained: The Soviet Union became Stalin's fiefdom, and all criticism was silenced.

Since the Great Terror of 1936–1938 was an outburst of unprovoked violence directed by Stalin rather than a reaction to actual subversion, it made an impact not so much on the counterinsurgency doctrine as on the nature of the Communist party that would enforce this doctrine and on police tactics. The ensuing terror eliminated the remnants of free discussion within the party's top echelon, leading to the loss of flexibility in political decision making. The higher-level Soviet leaders stopped discussing the party line; instead, they blindly followed orders, even if they knew these orders were counterproductive.

Although the Soviet police employed an informer network when it fought peasant rebellions during the civil war, this network was in an embryonic stage at that time.[68] During the purges, the NKVD, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, greatly expanded the informer network. Total mistrust and pervasive spying are major features of a totalitarian regime, and a vast army of informers helps it nip any dissent in the bud. The Soviet police recruited

[67] Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 311.

[68] Tukhachevsky, "Bor'ba s kontrrevoliutsionnymi vosstaniiami," in Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* p. 229; Leonidov, "Eserobanditizm v Tambovskoi gubernii i bor'ba s nim," in Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe vosstanie,* p. 292.

informers in every societal cluster: offices, factories, universities, merchant ships, collective farms, trade and artistic unions, churches, circuses, sports clubs, the armed forces, and labor camps. Since the police collected most of its intelligence through this comprehensive system of surveillance, its officers were trained to organize and supervise its operations. This training helped them later when they engaged in the counterinsurgency campaign in the borderlands.

The Great Terror exacerbated the ruthlessness of police actions, lowered the threshold of the permissible violations of law, and enhanced the arbitrariness of legal practice. The primary Soviet agency charged with defending the law was the Prosecutor's Office. It was anything but a law guardian during the terror. Prosecutor General Andrei Vyshinskii advanced the thesis that confession equaled guilt.[69] This thesis prompted the police to extract confessions by any means, and the Politburo made these means available to the police. Contrary to the law, the police could keep suspects without charge as long as it wished, and it received the right to repress not only the suspects themselves but also their relatives in cases qualified as political crimes. Many such cases were tried by the NKVD Special College founded in 1934. It followed a simplified procedure in the absence of defendants, defense lawyers, and witnesses, which left the defendants no chance for justice. In 1934–1938, 113,103 persons were sentenced by the NKVD Special College to various jail terms up to eight years – the maximum punishment it was allowed to impose.[70] In 1937, for the first time since the foundation of the Soviet state, the Politburo officially endorsed torture as a method of investigation, and Vasilii Ul'rikh, the notorious chair of the Military College of the Supreme Court, typically dismissed defendants' claims that they implicated themselves under duress as a "plot launched by enemies of the people who seek to mislead the court."[71] When the government issued an important directive on 17 November 1938 entitled, "Arrests, Prosecutor Monitoring and the Conduct of Investigations," lashing out at the NKVD because of its methods,[72] some prosecutors decided that this was a signal for a termination of torture. However, Stalin wrote on 10 January 1939, "Experience showed that this approach [torture] brought results and greatly accelerated the unmasking of enemies of the people" and therefore, it was "absolutely correct and useful." He warned regional party committees against reprimanding policemen who tortured suspects in violation of the law: "The physical methods of coercion should surely be applied henceforth, as an exception, towards obvious enemies of the people who show no remorse."[73] The prosecutors who insisted on upholding the law were

[69] Peter Solomon, *Sovetskaia iustitsiia pri Staline* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1998), p. 347.

[70] Document No. 351 in Hilda Sabbo, ed., *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2 (Tallinn, 1996), pp. 1009–1010.

[71] Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, Vol. 1, p. 536.

[72] Document No.1 in Stepashin, ed., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 1, Book 1 (Moscow: Kniga i biznes, 1995), pp. 3–8.

[73] Document No.15 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, Vol. 5, p. 59.

accused of "a lack of class instinct," declared "enemies of the people," and executed.[74] After that, nobody dared to object to torture. The subsequent relaxation of the terror slightly reduced the arbitrariness of Soviet justice, but it remained far more arbitrary than it had been before the purge. Investigators were ordered to follow legal procedures, but these procedures were simplified to expedite the investigation, and party officials could override the legal restrictions within certain limits.[75] These limits were deliberately left vague to give officials and policemen a greater freedom of action but simultaneously keep them on the hook so that they could be sacrificed if the party line moved unpredictably and the next purge required victims. Ul'rikh instructed the judges a month after the directive of 17 November 1938 was issued: "It is better to be accused of exceeding our authority than of liberalism and absence of vigilance." He warned them: "No other penalty but the firing squad should be given to investigation officers or judges exposed as conscious saboteurs, as enemy accomplices."[76] In the following year, the Soviets extended their justice system to the borderlands.

Conclusion

The revolution and the civil war taught the Communists that in order to take and keep power in an agrarian country, they had to address the interests of peasants and quickly offer them something spectacular to secure their support. The radical agrarian reform was among the central factors that let the Bolsheviks win the civil war. Before the Decree on Land, they had few followers in the countryside. After the Bolshevik government gave land to the peasants, the Red Army was always larger than the forces of all its opponents taken together, which shows that even during War Communism, most politically active peasants sided with the Bolsheviks.

The Soviet regime adopted some coercive methods from the Tsarist Empire, but was more creative in formulating a political strategy than the Imperial government had been. The Bolsheviks engaged in counterinsurgency while advancing the revolution and used a revolutionary strategy to fight the rebels. They realized that they could handle peasants more easily after the traditional village hierarchy and system of values had been destroyed. Unlike counterinsurgents elsewhere, the Bolsheviks did not pursue political stabilization while fighting peasant rebels; on the contrary, they escalated social tensions, seeking to split peasants along class lines and attract most of them during a crucial period of the power struggle while repressing the *kulak* minority and intimidating the rest into neutrality. Deportations, preventive arrests, hostage taking, amnesties, and covert operations became the standard tools of Bolshevik counterinsurgents; militias were their important component and random violence

[74] Solomon, *Sovetskaia iustitsiia pri Staline,* p. 239.
[75] Ibid., pp. 247, 341, 402–408.
[76] Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, Vol. 1, pp. 545–546.

their typical flaw. No peasant rebellion could withstand the concerted effort of the Reds to crush it, yet after two years of exhausting counterinsurgency campaigns, the Soviet government found itself in a stalemate. The firsthand experience in insurgency of the Bolshevik counterinsurgents helped them to realize the political factors of such conflicts were more important than were the military ones. The party performed an impressive political maneuver by introducing the NEP, ending the grain procurements. Although this switch postponed the dream of a proletarian paradise, it effectively terminated the insurgency.

The Communist party changed between the civil war and World War II, and its new leaders pursued a set of values quite different from the objectives of the early Bolsheviks. The strategies of the latter were erratic, being the product of Marxist dogmas, circumstance, and a sincere desire to benefit the toilers. The Bolsheviks viewed themselves as liberators of the world proletariat but had only vague ideas about how this liberation would proceed; they promoted national self-determination, proletarian internationalism, and revolutionary romanticism. The Stalinists abandoned these ideals in favor of Soviet nationalism, xenophobia, and uniformity. They pursued only the interests of the state as they understood them. Although the Stalinists adopted most security policies developed by their predecessors, they lost political flexibility with the increasing totalitarian trend in the Soviet Union. No dramatic political shifts in response to the situations that contradicted the theory, such as the introduction of the NEP, were possible any longer; instead, the party would stubbornly cling to its new theoretical postulates, invented merely to justify the desired policies, and ignore the conflict of these postulates with reality. When the Soviet Union invaded neighboring states in 1939–1940, its leaders knew exactly what they would do in the new territories: They planned to establish an exact copy of the Stalinist system as quickly as possible and crush any resistance by employing a pacification model developed during the civil war and in the interwar years. This model presumed not just a prompt elimination of any political opposition but also a comprehensive purge of all *potential* dissidents. The "hostile classes" had to be destroyed, but the majority had to be won through political means tested earlier in the Soviet Union or subdued by a combination of stick and carrot. This model was to be applied universally across the borderlands with no regard to local peculiarities. The carrot sweet enough to win the peasant majority in early-twentieth-century Russia was not as attractive to borderland farmers living in different social and economic conditions; accordingly, the Stalinists increasingly relied on the stick, ignoring "the collateral damage" produced with the eradication of real and imagined opponents.

2

The Borderland Societies in the Interwar Period

The First Soviet Occupation and the Emergence of Nationalist Resistance

> One momentary blow delivered to Poland by the German Army and later by the Red Army was sufficient to smash this ugly offspring of the Versailles Treaty that existed at expense of non-Polish nationalities.[1]
>
> – Viacheslav Molotov, People's Commissar of the Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union

During the Revolution and the civil war, Russia lost many of its western provinces. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Finland each declared independence in 1917–1918, whereas Poland and Romania took advantage of the turmoil in Russia to appropriate adjacent territories. When Hitler offered the Soviet Union a nonaggression pact in August 1939, Stalin sensed an opportunity to return these lands. On 23 August, Germany and the Soviet Union concluded a pact that divided eastern Europe between them, and a week later, Germany attacked Poland, thus triggering World War II. After the Polish Army virtually disintegrated, Germans surrounded Warsaw and reached the demarcation line set by the Nazi-Soviet pact, the USSR invaded Poland from the east on 17 September. By July 1940, it absorbed most of the former imperial possessions. This chapter analyzes the rural societies of eastern Poland and the Baltic States in the interwar period, outlining the strains they experienced and discussing how the Soviet government attempted to exploit those strains after it occupied those regions. Soviet reforms found some support among borderland people but did not take root before the German attack and the repressions provoked the growth of anti-Communist resistance. The nature and ideologies of resistance groups varied by region, but most pursued authoritarian agendas and hoped to win independence for their states with the help of Germany.

After democracies collapsed in Poland and the Baltic States between 1926 and 1934, they were ruled by conservative dictators. Poles were relatively well

[1] *Pravda,* 1 November 1939, p. 1.

off in the context of interwar eastern Europe. However, the moderately authoritarian Sanacja regime discriminated against Ukrainians and Belorussians, who together constituted about 20 percent of Poland's population but dominated the eastern provinces, the least developed regions of the country.[2] Agrarian and ethnic tensions were endemic in eastern Poland. Although Poles were a minority there, a mere 30 percent of the population,[3] they owned most of the land. In an attempt to polonize the eastern areas, the state sponsored the settlement of Polish war veterans, *osadniks,* on the best lands to serve as a Polish stronghold in these territories, creating an estate similar to that of Cossacks in imperial Russia. This intrusion of 200,000 privileged Poles further embittered the uneasy ethnic relations.[4] On the eve of World War II, 47 percent of the land in Ukrainian-dominated regions belonged to the landlords, 80 percent of whom were Poles, whereas 16 percent of the rural population were landless agricultural laborers. Of all landowners, 76 percent had less than 2 hectares,[5] which was regarded as inadequate to sustain a family. Land shortages among Ukrainians and Belorussians frequently provoked large riots and even insurgency against Polish landlords and *osadniks*. As Timothy Snyder observes, "[T]he modern history of the Ukrainian peasantry is one of rebellion to gain land."[6] The Polish government sought to assimilate minorities and gradually closed schools that were teaching in their native languages. From 1922 to 1938, the number of Ukrainian secondary schools in Galicia dropped from 2,426 to 352 and in Volhynia from 443 to 8. No Ukrainian universities existed in Poland.[7] Along with social and economic inequality, forced polonization aroused hostility toward the government and the Poles and provoked resistance that polarized the East Slavic communities between leftists and nationalists.

In Volhynia, the Peasant–Worker Union, an alliance of leftist parties and a front organization of the illegal Communist party, demanded redistribution of the land to Ukrainian peasants without compensation to owners. It was the most popular party in that region in the early 1930s. The Communist party also maintained strongholds in Belorussian-dominated regions throughout the 1930s.[8] At the opposite end of the political spectrum, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) emerged in 1929. It rallied young radicals frustrated with the inability of conventional political parties to defend the interests of the Ukrainian community. OUN was a revolutionary underground group

[2] Timothy Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 74.

[3] Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), p. 140.

[4] Ibid., p. 140.

[5] David R. Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s* (Edmonton, Canada: University of Alberta Press, 1992), p. 27.

[6] Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War,* p. 91.

[7] Paul R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1996), pp. 588, 594.

[8] Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, 69, 72, 73, 140; Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 31.

seeking to unite all lands populated by Ukrainians, forming an independent Ukrainian state. It outlined its short-term strategy in 1930 thus: "We will win a large part of the population to the idea of liberation and revolution by conducting assassinations of individuals and periodic mass actions. … Only by actions that are permanently repeated can we initiate and maintain the spirit of permanent protest against the occupying state."[9] Following this strategy, OUN engaged in a campaign of assassinations, targeting Polish officials in order to provoke political turmoil and radicalize Ukrainians, inciting them to rise up against the Polish state. On the eve of the Soviet invasion, eastern Poland had accumulated considerable social strain. Most members of the Ukrainian and Belorussian communities believed the Polish government was treating them unfairly and ignoring their grievances.

In the Baltic region, the system of Estonian President Konstantin Päts was the least authoritarian, and that of Lithuanian dictator Antanas Smetona, the most. The majority of the politically active Balts supported or tolerated authoritarianism, for it brought political stability and economic growth. Agriculture dominated the economy of the Baltic States. In Lithuania, farmers constituted 76 percent of the total population in 1939–1940, and in Estonia and Latvia, 66.4 and 64.8 percent, respectively.[10] The governments of the Baltic States initiated agrarian reforms in the interwar period in order to reduce the inequality in land ownership. In Latvia and Estonia, the reforms leveled peasants more effectively than in Lithuania, where by 1939 the richest 2.6 percent of farms (over 50 hectares) owned 16.1 percent of agricultural land, whereas the poorest 49.5 percent (less than 10 hectares) owned 17.2 percent[11] (Table 2.1).

In the Baltic region, a 10-hectare lot was regarded as the minimum sufficient to sustain a family. However, by 1940, half of Lithuanian and one-third of Latvian and Estonian peasants still had smaller lots and survived only by working as sharecroppers. Landless agricultural laborers made up 21.3 percent of the Lithuanian rural working population. The Latvian agrarian reform reduced the proportion of landless peasants from 61.2 to 18.0 percent between 1920 and 1937 but did not eliminate tenant land use.[12] These landless laborers, a Vilnius newspaper observed, were the "true serfs of our age, most unfortunate people." They had no permanent employment and received one-third of the pay of unskilled urban workers.[13] After several peasant revolts erupted in Lithuania,

[9] Orest Subtelny, "Ukraïna. Istoriia," *UIZh* 12: 127, 1991.

[10] Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States* (London: Hurst & Co, 1993), p. 364.

[11] Leonas Sabaliunas, *Lithuania in Crisis* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1972), pp. 66, 72; "*Spravka o nekotorykh sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh izmeneniiakh v krestianskikh khoziaistvakh Litovskoi SSR* [Information about some socioeconomic changes among Lithuanian farmer households]" (August 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 27, ll. 3, 4.

[12] Pranas Zunde, "Lithuania's Economy" in V. Stanley Vardys, ed., *Lithuania Under the Soviets* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), 142; Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), 41.

[13] Sabaliunas, *Lithuania in Crisis*, pp. 78, 80.

TABLE 2.1 *Economic Profile of the Baltic Countryside, 1939–1940 (Percentage)*

Farms	Lithuania, Early 1939/Early 1940	Latvia, Early 1940	Estonia, 1939
<5 ha	24.1/27.4	16.0	15.7
5–10 ha	25.4/25.7	18.0	17.0
10–20 ha	30.1/29.6	33.2	28.8
20–30 ha	11.1/10.9	15.8	18.2
>30 ha	9.3/6.4	17.0	20.3

Note: In Lithuania, the proportion of the farms of each category changed slightly after the incorporation of the Vilnius Province in October 1939.[14]

the left-center Populist party advocated in 1939 another, more radical agrarian reform. Latvian President Karlis Ulmanis also planned a radical agrarian reform in Latvia in 1939 that would alienate land from wealthy peasants and distribute it among their poorer neighbors, thus eliminating tenant land use.[15]

In the long run, these social strains caused by the pains of modernization would have been alleviated through gradual migration of bankrupt farmers to the cities, but by 1940, as Leonas Sabaliunas writes, "[A] great many [Lithuanian] citizens became distinctly unhappy and felt that something had gone awry in their country." This feeling rose when the Baltic States plunged into economic recession after the beginning of World War II; the cost of living in Lithuania increased by 18.1 percent between September 1939 and June 1940. The Lithuanian Department of State Security reported: "Communist propaganda finds favourable response among our workers. Many workers who are not communists are influenced by them."[16] In Latvia and Estonia, the economic situation was better and the social strains less intense.

All three states maintained national guards, *Šauliu Sajunga* in Lithuania, *Aizsargi* in Latvia, and *Kaitseliit* in Estonia. These voluntary armed militias became strongholds of authoritarianism. They came mainly from the middle and lower middle class: white-collar workers, craftsmen, farmers, and university students, commanded by reserve officers. Soviet officials identified 5.16 percent of *Kaitseliit* members as factory workers, 8.12 percent as agricultural laborers, 2.43 percent as *bedniaks* and *seredniaks,* 38.47 percent as *kulaks,* 12.4 percent as urban bourgeoisie, and 21.32 percent as white-collar workers.[17] By the end of the 1930s, the *Šauliu Sajunga* had about 50,000 members, the

[14] Toivo Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1991), 128; B. Baranauskas, Head of the Agrarian Section of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, "Spravka o zemlepol'zovanii v Litve [Information about Land Use in Lithuania]" (no date), RGASPI, f.597, op.1, d.10, l. 16; Vasilii Riazanov, Head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia, "O politicheskom i khoziaistvennom polozhenii v Latviiskoi SSR [Political and Economic Situation in Latvia]" (1946), RGASPI, f.600, op.1, d.11, ll. 56, 57.

[15] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml',* p. 41.

[16] Sabaliunas, *Lithuania in Crisis,* pp. 43, 65, 85, 213.

[17] Document No. 8 in Hilda Sabbo, ed., *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 3 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 64.

Kaitseliit 42,600, and the *Aizsargi* about 42,000. These militias acquired basic military training; their tactical manuals had an emphasis on marksmanship and guerrilla actions. Patriotic youth organizations and student corporations had tens of thousands of members in every Baltic State.[18]

When the Soviet Union began its westward expansion, the ethnic minorities of Poland were friendlier to the Soviets than were the Balts – partly because the social tensions in eastern Poland were greater than in the Baltic region, partly because few members of these minorities associated themselves with the Polish state and regretted its demise, and partly because the cultural barriers between Ukrainians and Belorussians in eastern Poland and their counterparts in the Soviet Union were lower than those between Slavs and Balts. In eastern Poland, the Red Army "was welcomed by smaller or larger but, in any case, visible, friendly crowds" that often erected triumphal arches to greet it. The existence of leftist sentiments in parts of eastern Poland helped the Soviets to establish their authority. Peasants set revolutionary committees on their own initiative.[19] The Soviets divided eastern Poland between the Soviet republics of Ukraine and Belorussia and gave Wilno region to Lithuania.

As the Bolsheviks had done during the October Revolution, the Soviet government immediately launched radical agrarian reforms, giving land confiscated from landlords and the church to poor peasants and agricultural laborers. It reduced urban unemployment and promoted local ethnic culture: Ukrainian and Belorussian became official languages. The Soviets reformed the school system, introducing obligatory secondary education with a curriculum in Ukrainian and Belorussian. The Polish university in Lvov was "ukrainianized" and health care improved considerably.[20] These measures elevated the social status of Ukrainians and Belorussians. However, instead of pursuing ethnic equality, the Soviets discriminated against the Poles: They banned the Polish language in all secondary schools and universities and usually prevented Poles from taking jobs in the government sector. These policies were popular among the ethnic majorities of western Ukraine and Belorussia.

Although, as some Baltic authors admit, "local communists and other collaborationists enthusiastically welcomed the USSR occupation army,"[21] most Balts were shocked when the Soviet Union invaded their countries in June 1940. For West Ukrainians and Belorussians, Soviet occupation simply meant a change of masters, whereas Balts lost their independence. However, a sizable part of the Russian and Jewish minorities welcomed the Soviets; large street demonstrations in support of the new government did occur in the Baltic

[18] Document No. 8 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, Vol. 3, pp. 66–71; Tiit Noormets, "The Summer War: The 1941 Armed Resistance in Estonia," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 2000), p. 207.

[19] Gross, *Revolution from Abroad,* pp. 20, 29, 42.

[20] Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, p. 619; Orest Subtelny, "The Soviet Occupation of Western Ukraine, 1939–1941," in Yury Boshyk, ed., *Ukraine during World War II* (Edmonton, Canada: University of Alberta, 1986), pp. 8, 9.

[21] Elmars Pelakus, ed., *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia* (Riga: Nordik, 1999), p. 311.

region; a Red Guard militia was organized from below, and workers' committees elected at factories after the Soviet occupation addressed the problems accumulated by the former authoritarian regimes.[22] As in western Ukraine and Belorussia, the Soviet government attempted to attract poor farmers and agricultural laborers, the majority of the rural community in Lithuania, and large minorities in Latvia and Estonia by launching a radical agrarian reform. However, those who received land could not collect crops before the Germans seized their lots and so did not become ardent Soviet supporters. The Soviets brought unprecedented opportunities for upward social mobility, and opportunists promptly hopped on the bandwagon. Within a year of Soviet occupation, the Estonian Communist party grew from 133 to 3,750 members, the Latvian party from 967 to 3,130, and the Lithuanian party from 1,741 to 4,620, partly because Communist émigrés and Slavic officials arrived from the old territories. In Estonia, 12,000 young men and women applied for Komsomol membership, although only half of them were accepted. Most party members belonged to the urban bureaucracy,[23] but peasants and workers who joined the party were propelled above their classes. Most administrative positions in the Baltic republics, especially in the countryside, were filled by local people. Hundreds of poor peasants who were not party members still ran village and district councils; accordingly, in Latvia, "the prospect of taking the place of the former traditional elites right away or in the near future ensured for the Soviet regime at least 20 to 30 active supporters per 1,000 members of the small communities" with populations under 10,000.[24] In addition, as Irene Šneidere notes, "The Soviet Union managed to create a thoroughly positive image of itself among a part of [the] intellectual elite, which was fed unsubstantiated illusions about the situation in the USSR."[25]

On the eve of the Soviet occupation, Jews constituted 8 percent of the population in western Ukraine, between 8 and 9 percent of Lithuanians, 5 percent of Latvians, and 1 percent of Estonians.[26] They lived mainly in towns. A traditionally oppressed minority, Jews were grossly overrepresented among the Communists. In the West Ukrainian city of Lutsk in 1933, every member of the party was Jewish,[27] and Jews constituted 35 percent of the

[22] Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), pp. 15–23.

[23] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 359; Rein Taagepera, *Estonia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), p. 65; Sabaliunas, *Lithuania in Crisis,* p. 55; Document No. 4 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, Vol. 3, p. 44.

[24] Juris Pavlovics, "Change of Occupation Powers in Latvia in Summer 1941: Experience of Small Communities," in Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 95.

[25] Irene Šneidere, "The First Soviet Occupation Period in Latvia, 1940–1941," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, p. 49.

[26] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 140, Alfred Senn, "Baltic Battleground," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, p. 22.

[27] Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*, p. 67.

Lithuanian Communist party.[28] After the Soviet Union incorporated the western borderlands, the new authorities viewed all those who had been oppressed by previous governments as allies. They invited local Communists and other leftists, many of whom were Jewish, to take positions in the Soviet administration. Jan Gross observes that Jews "lost the humiliating sense of being second-class citizens," but the perception that the Soviet authority sponsored Jews made others feel "how unseemly, how jarring, how offensive it was to see a Jew in *any* position of authority – as an engineer, a foreman, an accountant, a civil servant, a teacher or a militiaman."[29] This perception was wrong. The Soviets based their policies on class rather than on ethnic principles. Businesses owned by Jews fell victim to nationalization, like those owned by anyone else, and since Jews were overrepresented among businessmen, they suffered proportionately more than other borderland groups. Yet the Soviets granted borderland Jews real equality for the first time in modern history, and the Jews enjoyed much greater physical security.[30]

The initial limited support for the Soviet regime among the borderland populations soon waned because of other aspects of Soviet policy. The authoritarian regimes were replaced by foreign totalitarianism: The older limitations of civil freedoms seemed negligible when compared with the total absence of freedoms in the Communist state. Penalties for dissent became much harsher, and all political parties and nongovernmental associations were banned, except for the Communist party. The Soviets nationalized all businesses, including the smallest ones; purged the administration, the army, and the police; and disbanded the national guards. Three aspects of government policy particularly angered farmers. First, taxes on prosperous peasants rose sharply. Second, the collectivization that started in the spring of 1940 in western Ukraine and Belorussia, accompanied by deportations of wealthier peasants and dissidents, was extremely unpopular. The collectivization still was in its infancy, but the state had shown its hand. Finally, many high-ranking administrators were replaced with ethnic Russians, Jews, or émigrés from eastern regions, whom the population regarded as alien. Feeling insecure in the Baltic lands, the Soviets initially moderated their punitive policies, and they made no collectivization attempt. However, when the government began raising wages and prices for food and consumer goods in an attempt to equalize prices in Russia and the Baltic lands, this led to panic in the markets and the introduction of coupons for some goods. Coupons, unseen in these regions after World War I, undermined the reputation of the authorities.[31] During the first months of the Soviet rule, the Baltic communities were split into "ardent supporters and ardent opponents of the new regime with a broad

[28] Senn, "Baltic Battleground," p. 24.
[29] Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*, pp. 264, 267.
[30] Senn, "Baltic Battleground," p. 23; Šneidere, "The First Soviet Occupation Period in Latvia," p. 41.
[31] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml'*, pp. 114–116.

layer of indifferent population in between."[32] The deportations of suspected "anti-Soviet elements" that followed in the spring of 1941 reduced the number of supporters and multiplied the opponents of the Communists. The Soviet policy toward religion compounded this trend.

Most borderland people were religious.[33] A large number of West Ukrainians and the overwhelming majority of West Belorussians embraced the Orthodox Church. Poles, Lithuanians, a minority of Latvians, and fractions of Ukrainians and Belorussians were Roman Catholics, and most Latvians and Estonians were Lutherans. Galician Ukrainians and a handful of Belorussians belonged to the Uniate Church that emerged in 1596 as an outcome of a compromise between the Polish state and the Orthodox Church dominating its eastern provinces. The Uniate Church acknowledged the supremacy of the Vatican but preserved its Orthodox rites, Eastern canon law, and administrative autonomy. The Lutheran Church was losing its congregation in the interwar period,[34] but other major churches retained strong positions in the borderland societies. Non-Lutheran versions of Protestantism were minor denominations, but they had more followers in the western borderlands than in the old territories. Judaism also was widespread in the borderlands. Religious diversity was greatest in western Ukraine. The Uniate Church had the largest congregation, mainly in Galicia: 4.3 million Ukrainians by 1939. As for the others, 2 million Roman Catholics, 1.5 million Orthodox Christians, and 800,000 followers of Judaism lived in western Ukraine according to the census of 1931.[35] The Orthodox churches in pre-1939 Ukraine and Belorussia, as well as in the Baltic region, were branches of the Moscow Patriarchate. In eastern Poland, the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Poland achieved an independent status in 1924.[36]

When the Soviets reincorporated the borderlands in 1939–1940, clerics of all denominations braced themselves, anticipating trouble. Their expectations were justified. The government banned religion from schools and the armed forces, introduced civil marriage and divorce, abolished religious holidays, and organized branches of the Militant Godless League. As Stanley Vardys writes, "[T]he measures of 'secularization', though numerous and quick, were not violent, were not designed to drive the church underground, but to exclude it from society."[37] The Soviet agrarian reform that confiscated the church land

[32] Pavlovics, "Change of Occupation Powers in Latvia," p. 95.

[33] Valerii I. Pasat, *Deportatsii s territorii Moldavskoi SSR 1940–1951* (Moscow, 1996), p. 429.

[34] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 125.

[35] O. E. Lysenko, "Do pitannia pro stanovishche tserkvi v Ukraini u period druhoi svitovoi viiny," *UIZh* 3:73–74, 1995.

[36] Harvey Fireside, *Icon and Swastika: The Russian Orthodox Church under the Nazi and Soviet Control* (Cambridge, MA: Harward University Press, 1971), p. 148.

[37] V. Stanley Vardys, *The Catholic Church, Dissent and Nationality in Soviet Lithuania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p. 47.

and distributed it among the poor was popular among peasants despite their religious fervor. However, the borderland communities disapproved of the subsequent economic strangulation of the church. The state avoided shutting down churches by administrative decision[38] but imposed such high taxes on religious rites that many parishes could not support the churches, and they were closed. Since many priests lived in the church buildings, they lost their homes; furthermore, the state deprived them of ration cards and established an income tax for clergy that was 40 percent higher than that paid by the rest of the population. Many priests had to switch to secular jobs.[39]

At the time the Soviet Union invaded Poland and the Baltic States, Soviet leaders increasingly were centralizing the state administration. They applied this principle to religious policy. Instead of dealing with a variety of administrative bodies representing the same or, from their point of view, nearly the same faiths, they preferred to deal with one body representing each major denomination because it was easier to control such a body by pressing its top hierarchs. First, they sought to reduce as much as possible the various versions of Orthodoxy and let the Russian Orthodox Church incorporate them. Second, they believed that the obedient Russian Orthodox Church was a lesser evil than were other denominations that were harder to monitor, and they sought to limit the influence of other churches. Assisted indirectly by government pressure against its rivals, the Russian Orthodox Church absorbed the Autocephalous Church of Poland, thus extending its authority over all Orthodox believers in the borderlands. The government also began to consider eliminating the Uniate churches in western Ukraine and Belorussia by having them incorporated into the Russian Orthodox Church. This would be the second such attempt in the twentieth century. The first was made during World War I, when Russia temporarily occupied Austrian Galicia, and the Russian administration began converting Uniate parishes to Orthodoxy.[40] The imperial government had neither the time nor the determination to finish this project, but it nonetheless created a precedent for the subsequent actions of Communists. The Soviet government allowed the Moscow Patriarchate to establish the Diocese of Ternopol and Galich, encompassing all of Galicia, with the long-term goal of conversion.[41] However, like its imperial predecessor, the Soviet administration could not accomplish its plans.

The government had no time to escalate the antireligious crusade to the heights it had reached in the old territories. The regime excluded priests from categories liable to mass deportations, but some clerics nonetheless were

[38] Document No. 12 in V. Vasil'ev et al., eds., *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 68.

[39] Henriks Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands in den Jahren des Kommunismus (1940–1990)," *Acta Baltica* 29/30:83–88, 1991–1992; Vardys, *The Catholic Church*, p. 60.

[40] Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State* (Edmonton, Canada: CIUS, 1996), pp. 17, 19.

[41] Ibid., p. 58.

accused of anti-Soviet activities and repressed. In Latvia, two Catholic priests were deported; in Lithuania, 39 were deported and 21 killed; and in the Lvov Archdiocese, a dozen of priests were executed or went missing, and 33 were arrested or deported.[42] The Soviet authorities thus revealed their intentions, provoking the hostility of religious communities.

In short, only a minority of rural residents in the borderland received any benefits from the new authorities. These benefits were offset by wounded patriotism, the shock of collectivization, repressions, and the militant anticlericalism of Soviet officials. The Uniate priest P. Oliinyk said that in Galicia, "the Poles could not make that many enemies in the twenty years of their occupation as the 'elder brother' did in one and a half years."[43] Evald Tynisson, who witnessed the Soviet occupation, explained the sentiment of many Estonians in the spring of 1941: They "hoped the war would stop this Russian nonsense. Our family never liked Germans. Something had to go terribly wrong to make us wait for them so impatiently. We hoped for their help, for liberation."[44] The harsh Communist policies soon provoked an anti-Soviet backlash.

Among the resistance groups operating in the borderlands in 1939–1941, only OUN had a distinctive ideology and a widespread underground network. It was most popular in Galicia and weaker in other West Ukrainian regions. OUN's ideology, "integral nationalism," was, in the words of John Armstrong, "very close to Fascism, and in some respects, such as the insistence on 'racial purity', [it] even went beyond the original Fascist doctrines."[45] Despite ideological eclecticism, national variations of fascism had common features, and OUN displayed many of them. Its leaders emphasized will and action over reason, they glorified violence and believed that the end justifies the means, and they called for national regeneration through cataclysmic revolution and territorial expansion. They were atheistic, ascetic, and egalitarian, although they lived in a deeply religious society that ranked people according to their wealth. They embraced messianic fanaticism, the cult of martyrdom, the *Führerprinzip,* and the notion that the amorphous masses needed to be led by a committed elite. The seventh of "The Ten Commandments of the Ukrainian Nationalist" issued by OUN in June of 1929 echoed Sergei Nechaev's *Catechism of the Revolutionary*: "Do not hesitate to commit the greatest crime if the good of the Cause demands it."[46] OUN's program was populist, anti-Communist,

[42] Trups-Trops, "*Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands,*" p. 90; Vardys, *The Catholic Church,* p. 51; Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*, p. 56.

[43] P. P. Oliinyk, "Zoshyty," *UIZh* 1:115, 117, 1993.

[44] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml'*, p. 127.

[45] John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (Englewood: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1990), p. 212.

[46] Document No. 2 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, p. 174; Basil Dmytryshyn, ed., *Imperial Russia: A Source Book, 1700–1917* (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1999), pp. 350–354. Sergei Nechaev, a shady character playing with revolutionary rhetoric in the nineteenth century, was sentenced to 20 years of hard labor for murdering a fellow conspirator.

anticapitalist, and antiliberal. "Integral nationalism" was xenophobic from its birth, but it also adopted from Nazism biologic racism and a touch of antisemitism.[47] Dmytro Dontsov, OUN's spiritual mentor, proclaimed Hitler a man "with a soul as great as the tasks that Germany was facing"; he translated into Ukrainian *Mein Kampf,* Benito Mussolini's *Fascist Doctrine,* and writings by Francisco Franco, Antoniu Salazar, and François La Rocque.[48]

According to Dontsov, racial purity distinguished "master" from "plebeian" nations. OUN imagined the future independent state as ethnically homogeneous. OUN publications consistently called for the destruction of "the Muscovite-Jewish plague" and held that the future Ukrainian state would have "no place for Muscovites, Jews and Poles."[49] "The problem of race in Ukraine," wrote an OUN leader, "must be solved by cleansing Ukraine of the superfluous multiethnic elements of *moskali* [a derogatory term for Russians], Jews, Poles, Magyars, Tatars and others."[50] The state was to be ruled, at least at first, by a dictator. OUN proclaimed "the right of every nation to lead a free life in its own independent state" within its "ethnographic borders" and was "opposed to any nation intent on fulfilling its imperialistic goals." However, it also sought to integrate into its future state "all Ukrainian lands from the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea to Tisza" or parts of Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Belorussia, and Russia.[51] As Dontsov stated, "A society that rejects expansionism is in a state of decay." In tune with this ideology, OUN's First Congress proclaimed that "the nation

[47] Andrii Mel'nyk, "Ideolohichni osnovy ukraïns'kogo natsionalizmu [Ideological foundation of Ukrainian nationalism]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, l. 6; OUN, "Instruktsii [Instructions]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1716; Document No. 1 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II,* pp. 165–177; "Programmnye postanovleniia [Program statement]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 17, d. 125, ll. 1–14; Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 13.

[48] M. E. Gorelov, "Dmytro Dontsov: shtrykhy do politychnogo portretu," *UIZh* 6:92–93, 124, 1994.

[49] OUN-M, Leaflet to Ukrainian youth (no date), TsDAHO, f. 57, op. 4, d. 370, l. 18; OUN-B, "Slovo Organizatiï Ukraïnskikh Nationalistiv [Appeal of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists]" (June 1942), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 348, ll. 19, 20; OUN-B, "Robitnyky ukraïntsi! [Ukrainian toilers!]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 370, l. 45; OUN-B, "Ukraïntsi Polissia! [Ukrainians of Polissia!]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 370, l. 65; Yu Iosenko, "Osnovy zemel'noï polityky Organizatsiï Ukraïns'kykh Natsionalistiv [Foundation of the agrarian policy of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 369, ll. 61v, 62v, 63.

[50] Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 241; see also Mel'nyk, "Ideolohichni osnovy ukraïns'koho natsionalizmu," l. 6; Document No. 1 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, pp. 165–172; Subtelny, "*Ukraïna Istoriia,*" pp. 124, 125.

[51] Document No. 9 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, p. 186; OUN leaflet (1 March 1943), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, f. 353, l. 106; "Prapor ukraïns'koho natsionalista [The banner of Ukrainian nationalist]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 44, l. 544v. The map of "ethnographic borders of Ukraine" that includes all lands claimed by OUN beyond Ukrainian frontiers is published in a book written by Mykola Lebed', acting head of OUN in 1941–1943; Mykola Lebed', *UPA: Ukrains'ka povastans'ka armiia* (Suchasnist', 1987).

numerically increases its inventory of biological and physical strength with the simultaneous expansion of its territorial base"[52] – an idea resembling the notion of *Lebensraum*. OUN was popular mainly in Galicia. Its leaders viewed Galicians as the cream of the Ukrainian nation and sought to impose their views on all Ukrainians.

Ukrainian nationalism has a grim record of antisemitism. Two of the most celebrated Ukrainian heroes, Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi, Hetman of the Ukrainian Cossack state in the seventeenth century, and Symon Petliura, head of the Directory of the Ukrainian People's Republic in 1919–1920, organized or tolerated mass pogroms resulting in thousands of Jewish deaths.[53] Antisemitism was a secondary but nonetheless conspicuous aspect of OUN ideology, and the ideological concepts were backed by deeds. In 1935–1936, OUN organized a series of pogroms in Poland; about 100 Jewish families had their homes burned down by OUN militants. The antisemitism of the top OUN leaders was radicalized along with their increasing collaboration with the Nazis when they discovered a theoretical framework for their unarticulated xenophobia.[54] In April 1941, the Second Grand Congress of OUN proclaimed: "Jews are the most faithful supporters of the ruling Bolshevik regime and the vanguard of Muscovite imperialism in Ukraine. … The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists destroys the Jews as the basis of the Muscovite-Bolshevik regime, explaining at the same time to the masses that Moscow is the primary enemy."[55] In May 1941, an OUN document entitled, "Political, Military and Propaganda Directives for OUN Members in Case of War," identified Russians, Poles, and Jews as hostile minorities that must be killed or deported, except those who supported the regime imposed by OUN; among the latter, Poles were to be assimilated, whereas Jews were to be expelled from government jobs and "liquidated for the smallest misdemeanour." Jews were to be subject to persecution "as individuals and as an ethnic group." Like the Nazis, OUN planned the total extermination of minority intelligentsia and contemplated measures that would prevent the emergence of such an intellectual elite in the future. OUN proclaimed: "Our system will be horrible for its opponents: terror against the enemy – foreigners and their accomplices."[56] Such declarations predisposed OUN members to violence against ethnic minorities.

OUN was the only nationalist group that fought the authorities during the first Soviet occupation of the western borderlands, mainly by assassinating

[52] Wiktor Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth* (Toronto, Canada: Wiktor Poliszczuk, 1999), p. 87; Document No. 1 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, p. 165.

[53] Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, pp. 200, 201, 504–507.

[54] Aleksandr Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag: OUN, UPA i reshenie "evreiskogo voprosa"* (Moscow: Regnum, 2008), p. 29.

[55] "Programmnye postanovleniia [Program statement]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 17, d. 125, ll. 13, 14.

[56] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 14; Dukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag,* pp. 35, 36.

local activists. The police claimed to have destroyed 128 guerrilla units with 876 men in 1940 but could not eradicate nationalists.[57] OUN established a rigid regional hierarchy, dividing western Ukraine, the western part of central Ukraine, the southern part of Belorussia, and the eastern part of Poland occupied by Germany into several large operational regions that were subdivided into smaller ones up to the subdistrict level. OUN's local leading agencies, or *provods,* controlled the activities of its members in every region. The central *provod,* the overarching leading body with about a dozen members, supervised regional *provods*. Local leaders were appointed by higher-level *provods*. OUN maintained iron discipline and freely issued death penalties for its violation. In 1940, OUN split into two hostile factions: the larger, younger, and more radical OUN-B, headed by Stepan Bandera, and the opportunistic OUN-M, led by Andrii Mel'nyk. By 1941, the two factions had between them 20,000 members, half of them under 21 years old.[58]

OUN sought an alliance "with those nations that are hostile to Ukraine's occupiers," and since it regarded literally all neighbors of Ukraine as occupiers of Ukrainian territory, collaboration with Germany was a cornerstone of its strategy. It hoped, in Dontsov's words, "to liberate Ukraine in the shadow of the German march."[59] Since the early 1920s, OUN and its predecessor, the Ukrainian Military Organization, had been financed by the *Abwehr,* the German Intelligence Service, in return for information on Poland and subversion against it. Captain Lazarek, deputy commander of *Abwehrstelle* 202 Section, claimed that Bandera had received 2.5 million reichsmarks from Germany. When Germany attacked Poland, the *Abwehr* instructed OUN to rise in the Polish rear. About 7,000 Ukrainians participated in the uprising; they disarmed some Polish soldiers and killed hundreds of Polish civilians.[60] The Germans planned similar actions in the USSR coinciding with their attack. The *Abwehr* regarded Mel'nyk as its agent beginning with 1939 and Bandera beginning with 1940. Mel'nyk also collaborated with the Gestapo.[61] Erwin Stolze, head of the *Abwehr* in Berlin, testified:

I contacted Ukrainian National Socialists who were in the German Intelligence Service and other members of the nationalist fascist groups. … Instructions were given by me personally to the leaders of the Ukrainian Nationalists, Mel'nyk [Code Name

[57] S. V. Bilenko, *Na okhrane tyla strany: istrebitel'nye batal'ony i polki v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), p. 179.

[58] Bohdan Krawchenko, "Soviet Ukraine under Nazi Occupation, 1941–1944," in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, p. 19.

[59] Document No. 1 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, p. 170; M. V. Koval', "OUN-UPA: mizh 'tretim reikhom' i stalins'kym totalitaryzmom," *UIZh* 2–3:95, 1994.

[60] "Report on the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists" (no date, apparently 1934), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 338, ll. 85–93; V. P. Iampol'skii, "Kak trezubets vplelsia v svastiku," *VIZ* 2: 81–82, 1996; Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia* (London: Macmillan, 1981), p. 114; Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth,* pp. 136, 137, 146; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 146.

[61] Documents No. 2 and 4 in Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag,* pp. 112, 113, 122, 123.

'Consul I'] and Bandera to organize … demonstrations in the Ukraine in order to disrupt the immediate rear of the Soviet armies.[62]

Stolze perceived Mel'nyk as "a calm, intelligent civil servant, while Bandera was a careerist, a fanatic and a bandit." He complained that Bandera, "having received a large amount of money from the *Abwehr* for the creation of an underground for sabotage purposes, attempted to appropriate them and transferred them to a Swiss bank."[63] Both OUN factions pursued the same goal, an independent Ukraine, but they disagreed on the means. While OUN-M believed that independence could be attained only if granted by Germany and so collaborated unconditionally to earn Germany's good will, OUN-B proclaimed, "[T]he Ukrainian nation can attain its own state only in revolutionary struggle against the invaders," and therefore, it would "lean exclusively on the Ukrainian people and reject in principle the orientation towards foreign powers."[64] This did not, however, prevent OUN-B from cooperation with the Germans. The Second Congress of OUN-B stated: "The attitude of OUN to states and political movements is defined by their anti-Moscow stance, rather than the greater or lesser coherence with the Ukrainian national movement."[65] OUN-B leaders were to reap the bitter fruit of this policy soon after the German invasion.

The Soviet presence in western Belorussia aroused less resentment than it did in western Ukraine. Belorussians were poorer than Ukrainians, and the uniform Soviet policy hurt fewer people there; subsequently, dissent was weaker and repressions less severe. Collectivization progressed more slowly than in Ukraine. The Germans later observed that "Belorussian national consciousness is scarcely, or but weakly, in evidence" and "the Belorussian people and language do exist, but a Belorussian problem, as a nationalist-autonomist problem, does not"[66] – a striking difference with Ukraine. The absence of strong nationalist sentiments made sovietization smoother. No significant nationalist Belorussian movement existed in eastern Poland, and none emerged after the Soviet Union annexed it. By June 1941, 27 percent of Belorussian Communist party members resided in the western part of the republic.[67] In no other borderland region did Communists enjoy such a support.

The only opponents to the Soviet regime in western Belorussia were of Polish origin. The Soviet administration brought Poles only trouble. In the interwar period, Poland was the Soviet Union's most hostile neighbor.

[62] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 116.

[63] Document No. 4 in Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag,* p. 124.

[64] Programmnye postanovleniia, ll. 2, 5.

[65] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 12.

[66] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, p. 214; N. I . Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), p. 52.

[67] G. A. Shubin, *Iz istorii vsenarodnoi bor'by protiv nemetsko-fashistskikh okkupantov v zapadnykh oblastiakh Belorussii* (Volgograd: Nizhne-Volzhskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1972), p. 57.

Subsequently, the Poles were the primary targets of the ethnically motivated repressions of the 1930s in the old territories. In the western borderlands, Poles suffered under Soviet occupation more than any other ethnic group. The Soviet reforms benefited Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Jews at Poles' expense. The repressions of 1939–1941 targeted predominantly Poles, who constituted the great majority of deportees. During the invasion of Poland, the Soviets took 180,000 Polish soldiers and 15,000 officers as prisoners. In the spring of 1940, the government executed without trial 21,857 Polish citizens in the Katyn Forest and other locations; most of them, contrary to popular belief, were not army officers but policemen, prison wardens, frontier guards, and "other counterrevolutionary elements."[68] Such a mass killing of foreign nationals was an exception in Soviet repressive practice: Never before or after did the government explicitly order the execution of thousands of foreigners. This crime had no pragmatic justification, although some Russian authors speculate that it was revenge for the tens of thousands of Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) taken by the Poles during the Soviet-Polish war who died in captivity.[69] The remaining Polish POWs were kept in Siberian exile. Poles in the borderlands knew nothing about the Katyn affair until 1943, but they had enough other reasons to resent the Communists and the Soviet regime.

In September 1939, officers of the Polish Army organized the Union for Armed Struggle, the predecessor of the largest component of the Polish resistance, *Armija Krajowa* (AK, Home Army). Its goal was the restoration of Poland within the borders of August 1939 in the East and expansion to the West. The Ideological Declaration of the Union for Armed Struggle stated: "Our enemies are all totalitarian ideologies, and, today, in the first place, hitlerism and bolshevism."[70] The Union for Armed Struggle began organizing cells in western Ukraine, western Belorussia, Lithuania, and part of Poland occupied by Germany. At that time, the resistance, demoralized by the crushing defeat of Poland, took no action but was only regrouping for future struggle. It was predominantly urban-based, and the Soviet police eradicated it easily; mass deportations of Polish farmers wrecked any basis for resistance in the countryside. By the summer of 1940, the NKVD (*Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennikh del SSSR*; People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) virtually destroyed the Polish underground,[71] but it survived in the German-occupied part of Poland.

[68] Documents No. 72 and 73 in S. Stepashin, ed., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR,* Vol. 1, Book 1 (Moscow: Kniga i biznes, 1995), pp. 153–156; Document No. 316 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 1, p. 134.

[69] Pavel Sudoplatov, *Spetsoperatsii* (Moscow: Olma Press, 1999), p. 450. On conditions in Polish POW camps, see V. Krasnov and V. Daines, *Neizvestnyi Trotskii: krasnyi Bonapart* (Moscow: Olma Press, 2000), pp. 328, 329.

[70] Jan Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Uprising* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 79.

[71] V. S. Parsadanova, "Zarozhdenie pol'skogo dvizheniia soprotivleniia," in V. V. Mar'ina, ed., *Dvizhenie soprotivleniia v stranakh Tsentral'noi i Iugo-Vostochnoi Evropy*, (Moscow: RADIKS, 1995), p. 83.

In the Baltic region, the most significant resistance group during the first Soviet occupation was the Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF), which combined many political convictions and claimed to have 36,000 members, apparently inflating its strength.[72] LAF's goal was restoration of an independent Lithuania. Most LAF members were patriotic, anti-Communist, and antiliberal, and many were antisemitic. In November 1940, the former Lithuanian Minister to Berlin, Colonel Kazys Škirpa, organized its general headquarters in Berlin. Germany sponsored LAF because it promised to disorganize the Soviet rear with an armed uprising.[73] LAF maintained contact with the predominantly urban resistance cells emerging in Lithuania, which had no coherent ideology beyond national independence. How far LAF controlled the resistance network is unclear, but it did play a coordinating role. In its "Directives on the Liberation of Lithuania," LAF planned ethnic cleansing, among other measures.[74] It proclaimed: "[O]ne must create in the land a heavy atmosphere against the Jews so that no Jew could even dare to think that in the new Lithuania he could have even minimal rights and the general possibility of making a living. The purpose is to force all Jews to flee Lithuania."[75]

In Estonia and Latvia, only small urban resistance cells existed, with no coordinating body. Some of them spied for Germany and Finland and prepared an insurrection coinciding with Germany's attack.[76] However, the police arrested the leaders of all four major Latvian resistance groups in April 1941, thus devastating the political opposition.[77]

All nationalist resistance movements, except the Polish one, tied their hopes for the overthrow of the USSR to Germany's victory in the future war between these two states. The nationalists planned to exploit the turmoil caused by war to proclaim the independence of their states and face Germany with a *fait accompli*. They believed that the Germans would appreciate their cooperation and accept the restored states as junior partners in the war against Russia.

Conclusion

In the interwar period, social tensions were highest in eastern Poland, where they were compounded with ethnic conflicts, and in Lithuania, the

[72] "Memorandum of the Provisional Government of Lithuania" (1941), RVGA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, l. 11.

[73] Document No. 217 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 1, Book 2, p. 163.

[74] Sergei V. Zubrenkov, "Vooruzhennoe protivodeistvie natsionalistov Sovetskoi vlasti v Litve," Ph.D. dissertation, Moscow State University, 1999, p. 47.

[75] Senn, "Baltic Battleground," p. 24.

[76] Document No. 179 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 1, Book 2, pp. 79–81; Juris Ciganovs, "The Resistance Movement against the Soviet Regime in Latvia between 1940 and 1941," in Anušauskas, *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States*, pp. 124, 125.

[77] Ciganovs, "The Resistance Movement against the Soviet Regime in Latvia between 1940 and 1941," p. 127.

poorest Baltic State with the greatest economic stratification. In Latvia and Estonia, government-sponsored reforms mitigated the strains of modernization. However, even in eastern Poland and Lithuania, these tensions were moderate, and none of the western regions, in Lenin's words, was "pregnant with revolution."[78]

After the USSR incorporated these regions, its government sought to "sovietize" the borderlands quickly and ruthlessly – to bring them to Soviet standards, replace people's simple identities with nested ones, and eliminate any potential opposition. The Soviet regime planned to attain this goal through a combination of populist reforms intended to exploit local conflicts and sweeping repressions that targeted whole social groups and individuals. The response to these policies varied by region. The Soviets kept these lands for too short a time to undertake a cultural revolution. The reforms shook but did not destroy the rural social hierarchy, and wealthier farmers continued to dominate public opinion. The new authorities gave Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Jews a privileged position in comparison with Poles, and in every western region, Soviet agrarian reform benefited more peasants than it hurt, although the prospects of collectivization made those benefits seem illusory, and repressions targeted those whom borderland people regarded as the cream of their societies. In most frontier regions, Soviet attempts to strengthen security through reforms, coercion, and repression failed in the short run and often strengthened the simple identities of the local people instead of weakening them.

The resentment against the foreign totalitarianism that had replaced authoritarian native systems was a natural reaction for people whose national pride had been wounded by the occupation, unprovoked violence, collectivization, economic chaos, deliberate infringement on traditional values, militant atheism, and the arrogance of the new administrators. Most regions in the western borderlands contained a significant potential for anti-Soviet resistance. In 1939–1940, however, the Soviets met only weak opposition in the new territories; not only did resistance seem futile, but people were confused and did not know what to expect from the new authorities. By 1941, disappointment with Soviet policies had strengthened the opposition. It fell into three categories: OUN, who were pursuing revolutionary goals for an independent and ethnically pure Ukraine with an authoritarian social system; conservative nationalist movements, who were planning to restore the Baltic States; and the Polish resistance, an anti-Nazi and anti-Soviet armed force of a government-in-exile that was an ally of Great Britain. With the increasing tensions between Russia and Germany, the Poles braced themselves for another major cataclysm, whereas most western Ukrainians and Balts hoped that the German Army, which they

[78] V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii,* Vol. 35 (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1962), p. 256.

remembered as a decent force compared with others that had rolled over their lands between 1915 and 1921, would liberate them from the commissars. In gambling on Germany, the Ukrainian and Baltic nationalists ignored the basic principles of Nazi policy and ideology. This gamble had high stakes and great risks. In fact, no senior Nazi leader ever promised independence or even autonomy to the nationalists.

3

The Borderlands under German Occupation (1941–1944)

Social Context of the Soviet Reconquest

> You think that you can demand something from the Germans. The only ones who can demand anything here are we, the Germans. … You cannot demand anything. German soldiers liberated your land and as long as a single German soldier remains here, only we, the Germans, will command. … As long as I am in charge here, don't talk about independence. Forget this, gentlemen.[1]
>
> – Lauers, the representative of the *Generalkommissar* in Latvia, about the prospect of Latvian independence

The German invasion triggered anti-Soviet uprisings in all the western provinces. Pursued by the Wehrmacht and harassed by nationalist guerrillas, the Red Army and civilian administrators evacuated the borderlands. This chapter examines the impact that the German occupation and the actions of nationalist groups, German collaborators, and Red partisans had on borderland societies. It also offers an overview of the strategies nationalists chose during the German occupation and explains how those strategies affected relations between them, the Germans, and the borderland population. All nationalists, except the Poles, collaborated with the Germans, hoping the latter would allow them to establish independent states. The Germans, however, sought to turn the conquered eastern lands into a vast agrarian colony of the Reich. The brief honeymoon between the Germans and the nationalists ended with arrests and executions of nationalist leaders by the Nazis. The clashes between nationalists and Red partisans and the ethnic cleansing conducted by nationalists polarized the borderland societies. Those nationalists who pursued their own objectives instead of betting exclusively on Germany were better posed to

[1] Sergei Zelenov, deputy head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia, "Spravka o fashistskoi propagande v Latvii [Fascist propaganda in Latvia]" (1 January 1947), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 24, l. 2.

resist Soviet rule after the Red Army overran the borderlands than those who had collaborated to the bitter end.

3.1 The Borderlands during the German Onslaught

The best indicator of popular loyalty is the support for a government in a time of crisis. When Germany attacked Russia, some borderland people sided with the Soviets despite the disasters suffered by the Red Army. Over 30,000 Estonian and 60,000 Latvian civilians evacuated with the Red Army in the summer of 1941. The Latvian Red Guards, consisting of worker militia, covered the retreat of Soviet loyalists and suffered heavy casualties in battles with the Germans. Thousands of pro-Soviet Estonian militiamen clashed with nationalists in numerous bloody engagements.[2] However, most soldiers of the Baltic national armies who had been incorporated into the Red Army as the 22nd Estonian, 24th Latvian, and 29th Lithuanian territorial rifle corps and recruits drafted in western Ukraine were notoriously unreliable and defected to the Germans en masse. The Soviet General Staff, appalled by this mass treason, sent a large part of the Baltic territorial rifle corps as "labor battalions" to the Urals and Archangel Province in the summer of 1941 to set up factories evacuated from regions occupied by the Germans.[3] These desertions reflected the popular mood: The Soviet occupation produced few loyalists in the borderlands. Most West Ukrainians and Balts were happy when the Soviets left, and many viewed the Germans as liberators.

The last Soviet action before the evacuation had turned many politically passive borderland people into anti-Communists. In the first few days after the German attack, the NKVD executed thousands of inmates in towns threatened by German invasion. This was the most gruesome atrocity of the first Soviet occupation besides the Katyn affair. A Belorussian Communist

[2] Document No. 463 in S. Stepashin, ed., Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti, Vol. 2, Book 1 (Moscow: Rus', 2000), pp. 434–436; Toivo Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1991), p. 279; Rein Taagepera, *Estonia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), p. 67; A. Raškevics et al., eds., *Na pravyi boi, na smertnyi boi,* Vol. 1 (Riga: Liesma, 1968), p. 105; Indrek Paalve and Peeter Kaasik, "Destruction Battalions in Estonia in 1941," in Toomas Hiio, Meelis Maripuu, and Indrek Paavle, eds., *Estonia 1940–1945* (Tallinn: Estonian Foundation for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006), pp. 469–491; Peeter Kaasikand Tonis Moldre, "Evacuation in 1941 to the Rear Area in the Soviet Union," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 459.

[3] I. T. Mukovs'kyi, "Viis'kova mobilizatsiia v Ukraïni," in M. V. Koval', ed., *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii viini* (Kiev: Institute of Ukrainian History, 1995), p. 55; M. I. Semiriaga, *Kollaboratsionizm* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000), p. 525; Peeter Kaasik, "Formation of the Estonian Rifle Corps in 1941–1942," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 886; Peter Kaasik, "Formation of the Estonian Army into the Red Army Rifle Corps," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 789; Mart Laar, *Red Terror* (Tallinn: Grenader, 2005), p. 35. However, Nikolai Karotamm, first secretary of the Estonian Communist party, claimed in October 1941 that the 22nd Estonian Rifle Corps was fighting against Germans; Document No. 187, in Hilda Sabbo, ed., *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 3 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 637.

leader in Grodno probably was the first official to order such action when the Germans attacked this frontier city on 22 June 1941. He reported:

> Because of permanent bombardment [by the Germans] and because counterrevolutionary elements started to shoot at our officers from some buildings, I ordered … that all counterrevolutionary elements in jail be executed. At 19.00 the Grodno jail building where 3,500 prisoners were kept was damaged [by German bombs]. The jail's wardens shot at prisoners but they broke out into the city.[4]

This official sanctioned execution of thousands of inmates without consulting his superiors, although he probably had received instructions as to what to do in such circumstances. The next day, the NKVD ordered the evacuation of prisoners from western provinces to the interior, but after it found out that the police often could not do this because of logistical problems, Lavrentii Beria, the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, endorsed the summary execution of those sentenced for "counterrevolutionary crimes and grave embezzlement."[5] Hundreds if not thousands of inmates arrested for minor offences and even those detained for questioning also died during the hasty Soviet retreat. Nervous convoys killed many prisoners who were supposed to be evacuated, although the state regarded such executions as crimes and punished the perpetrators. The military prosecutor of the Vitebsk garrison reported on 5 July 1941:

> Yesterday I arrested and passed to a military tribunal the Warden of the Glubek District Jail, … who on 24 June convoyed 916 prisoners and suspects from the Glubek Jail to Vitebsk. During the march, the Warden executed 55 persons in two incidents and during the attack by [enemy] aircraft ordered the 67-man strong convoy to shoot the rest. … Over 500 of these prisoners were under investigation and some were not even charged.[6]

In total, the NKVD claimed to have evacuated 141,527 prisoners from the regions threatened by the Germans and killed 11,319.[7] These executions, the mass deportations on the eve of Soviet evacuation, and a scorched-earth policy during the retreat in the summer of 1941 caused an outrage in the borderlands. Many people responded to the appeal of the nationalists to rise against the evacuating Soviets to avenge their crimes, help the German liberators, and thus make a bid for independence of their nations.

An instruction issued by OUN's central *provod* on the eve of the German attack ordered "wholesale execution of enemies. This is a condition for our victory."[8] As OUN had promised to the *Abwehr,*[9] it organized insurrections in

[4] Pozniakov, "Doklad o sobytiiakh s 22 po 30 iiunia 1941g [Report about the events from 22 to 30 June 1941]" (5 August 1941), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 480, l. 132.

[5] Ivan Bilas, *Repesyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini 1917–1953,* Vol. 1 (Kyiv: Lybid', 1994), p. 128.

[6] I. V. Kuz'michev, "Shtrafniki," *Serzhant* 14:25, 2000.

[7] Document No. 19 in A. N. Dugin, ed., *Neizvestnyi GULAG* (Moscow: Nauka, 1999), p. 22.

[8] Document No. 31 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 1, Book 1, p. 412.

[9] Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia* (London: Macmillan, 1957), p. 116.

Lvov and other towns, but the police suppressed these and executed hundreds of insurgents.[10] The Ukrainian battalions *Roland* and *Nachtigall,* formed by the *Abwehr* on Bandera's initiative,[11] marched behind the Axis armies. When they entered Lvov on 30 June 1941, Iaroslav Stets'ko, OUN-B's second in command, proclaimed the independence of Ukraine. He did this without consulting the Germans but called on Ukrainians to "cooperate closely with National-Socialist Greater Germany, which under the leadership of its *Führer,* Adolf Hitler, is creating a new order in Europe and in the world." OUN-B's leaflets expressed similar sentiments: "The Red Jewish-Muscovite plague has been destroyed. … Glory to the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and its leader Stepan Bandera! Glory to the liberating German Army and its Führer Adolf Hitler!"[12]

In the Baltic region, the national guardsmen and those who evaded the mobilization to the Red Army, armed with weapons hidden since 1940, organized guerrilla units and attacked retreating Soviets. Over 9,000 Estonian members of the Home Guard *Omakaitse* organized in July 1941 mainly from former *Kaitseliit* members, operated under German command, and claimed to have killed and captured several hundred Soviet soldiers, militia and officials while losing 249 men killed and missing.[13] Court-martials set by *Omakaitse* engaged in the extermination of Soviet loyalists. While the most gruesome single atrocity in Estonia committed by the NKVD was the execution of 193 inmates in Tartu prison, *Omakaitse* of Voru Province alone issued 265 death sentences – many of them passed after actual executions – and probably paramilitaries on both sides summarily executed even more people.[14] The Estonian commando platoon *Erna,* which had been trained by Finnish Military Intelligence and by the *Abwehr,* landed in Estonia and raised 400 guerrilla volunteers.[15] A spontaneous revolt broke out in Tartu, and the insurgents controlled some regions of

[10] Jaroslav Stets'ko, "Press conference in Hague" (31 March 1960), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 44, l. 597.

[11] O. E. Lysenko, "Do pytannia pro uchast' ukraïntsiv u viiskakh derzhav-uchastnyts' druhoi svitovoi viiny," in Koval, *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii viini*, p. 93.

[12] Myroslav Yurkevich, "Galician Ukrainians in German Military Formations and in the German Administration," in Yury Boshyk, ed., *Ukraine during World War II* (Edmonton, Canada: University of Alberta Press, 1986), p. 83; OUN-B, "Ukraïntsi Polissia! [Ukrainians of Polesie!]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 370, l. 65.

[13] Colonel Maide, chief of the *Omakaitse* Head Section, "Svodka deiatel'nosti Omakaitse v 1941 g [Actions of *Omakaitse* in 1941]" (1941), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 452, l. 76. It becomes clear from *Omakaitse* reports that it exaggerated its efficiency no less than Soviet partisans. According to secondary Estonian sources, the insurgents – *Omakaitse* and other guerrillas – lost 819 men dead and missing in 1941; Tiit Noormets, "The Summer War: The 1941 Armed Resistance in Estonia," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 2000), p. 205.

[14] Peeter Kaasik and Mika Raudvassar, "Estonia from June to October 1941" in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, 507, 516; Indrek Paavle, "Soviet Investigations Concerning the Executions in Estonia" in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, 677.

[15] Kaasik and Raudvassar, "Estonia from June to October 1941," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 501.

Estonia days before the Germans arrived. Latvian nationalists organized 129 guerrilla units and attempted to take power in Riga during the first three days after the German attack, but the NKVD suppressed the uprising and shot 120 insurgents taken prisoner. However, after the Soviets evacuated Riga on 29 June, insurgents continued to attack the retreating pro-Soviet Latvian militia and military units. They even captured several Soviet commanders, including General Ivan Blagoveshchenskii, who later became a leader of the collaborator Russian Liberation Army.[16]

The most dramatic action of the Lithuanian resistance was the insurrection in Kaunas, the former capital of Lithuania, where guerrillas fought Red Army units on 23 June. They captured the radio station, proclaimed the restoration of independent Lithuania, and established a provisional government the day before the Soviets evacuated and the Germans entered Kaunas. Uprisings erupted in other towns as well. In total, between 16,000 and 20,000 Lithuanians participated in the revolt, and about 650 of them died in fights.[17] It was not the guerrillas but the Germans who drove the Soviets from Lithuania, yet the nationalists believed that the uprising strengthened their case for restoration of Lithuanian independence that they planned to present to the Germans. The Lithuanian provisional government was to be headed by Škirpa, who offered to mobilize Lithuanians for the war against the Soviets in exchange for independence. The provisional government, expressing "warm gratitude to National-Socialist Germany and its leader, Adolf Hitler," stated that it was "sure that Germany's victory and their [the Lithuanians'] active contribution to it will bring Lithuania its independence."[18] Although the anti-Soviet uprisings had only modest military significance, they increased the chaos during the Red Army's retreat. The anti-Soviet outburst revealed that most politically active borderland residents sided with Germany in the summer of 1941.

The nationalist uprisings frequently evolved into antisemitic pogroms. Jews were overrepresented in the NKVD and the Communist party, and borderland ethnic majorities therefore associated Jews with the Soviet repressions. Police documents show, however, that the majority of NKVD officers were members of titular ethnic groups.[19] The NKVD and party personnel responsible for

[16] Document No. 463 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 1, p. 433; Raškevics et al., *Na pravyi boi*, Vol. 1, pp. 19–21, 27, 28, 30, 64, 66, 70, 254; N. I. Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), p. 52.

[17] Brandišauskas, "Anti-Soviet Resistance in 1940 and 1941 and the Revolt of June 1941," in Anušauskas, *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States*, p. 18.

[18] "Memorandum of the Provisional Government of Lithuania" (1941), RVGA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, l. 13.

[19] Irene Šneidere, "The First Soviet Occupation Period in Latvia, 1940–1941," in Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 41; Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p. 220.

the Stalinist crimes evacuated with the Soviets, whereas the victims of the pogroms were people targeted for their ethnicity rather than their deeds. The borderland Jews suffered more than their peers in most European countries occupied by Germany because nationalists fervently hunted them.

Soon after the proclamation of Ukrainian independence, OUN-B issued an order of "collective responsibility (family and ethnic) for all offences [committed] against the Ukrainian state and OUN."[20] This order legitimized the extermination of all non-Ukrainians regardless of their deeds and political views and also all Ukrainians who did not share OUN's values. In Ukraine, pogroms occurred mostly in Galicia, OUN's stronghold. Some of these pogroms were spontaneous; others were organized by Nazis or local anti-semites. Numerous activists skillfully channeled the rage against the regime that had committed atrocities before the evacuation toward the local Jews, assumed to be Soviet loyalists. Many OUN members and battalion *Nachtigall* participated in the pogroms and executions of Jews.[21] On the third day after the beginning of the German invasion, Stets'ko reported to Bandera: "We are raising militia that will assist the extermination of Jews," and in July 1941, he, who regarded himself at that time as the head of the nationalist Ukrainian government, stated: "Moscow and Jewry are the primary enemies of Ukraine. … I am of the opinion that the Jews should be exterminated and [see] the expediency of carrying out in Ukraine the German methods for exterminating the Jews."[22] Such rhetoric inspired the pogroms, even though it is unknown how many members of the central *provod* shared Stets'ko's opinion and whether the central *provod* had an articulate position on this matter. Only much later, in April 1942, did the Second OUN's conference clarify the difference between the eventual and the immediate policy toward Jews: "Regardless of the negative attitude towards Jews as the weapon of Muscovite-Bolshevik imperialism, we consider it inexpedient *at the present stage of the international situation* to take part in anti-Jewish actions … in order to avoid becoming a blind weapon in somebody else's hands and distracting the masses from the major enemy," Russia.[23] One high-ranking functionary explained: "We clearly set guidelines for the policy towards Jews long before the war; our attitude towards them is extremely negative, but we do not take part in pogroms. However, sometimes politically unsophisticated Ukrainians were involved in pogroms."[24] In fact,

[20] Aleksandr Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag: OUN, UPA i reshenie "evreiskogo voprosa"* (Moscow: Regnum, 2008), p. 63.

[21] Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust* (London: Collins, 1986), 173–175; Jeffrey Burds, "*Agentura*: Soviet Informants' Network in Galicia, 1944–48" *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 11/1 (1997), 11/1: 128, 1997 Wiktor Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth* (Toronto: Wiktor Poliszczuk, 1999), 150–152; Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* 119; Dukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag*,52, 57.

[22] Dukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag*, pp. 44, 45.

[23] Ibid., p. 68. The emphasis is mine.

[24] M. Golin, "Zamitky na marhinezy nashoho derzhavnoho budivnitstva [Comments on our state building]" (no date), Rovno Provincial Archive, hereafter is cited as RPA, f. 30, op. 2, d. 3, l. 124.

the only reservation OUN had about pogroms was the concern that Ukrainians thus could exhaust their militant potential and neglect to fight their most bitter foe, Russia, which "must perish, no matter what it is – Red, tsarist, Soviet, proletarian, Orthodox or godless."[25] The most murderous pogroms committed by OUN occurred in Lvov in June 1941 and Zlochev the next month; both were triggered by discoveries of dead prisoners, many of whom were participants in the nationalist uprising suppressed by the Soviet police on 25 June. The pogrom in Lvov began before *Einsatzgruppe* B, tasked with extermination of the Jewish population, entered the city and continued with enhanced enthusiasm after its arrival whereas the pogrom in Zlochev proceeded without participation of the *Einsatzgruppe*. OUN militia also killed many members of the Polish intelligentsia during the Lvov pogrom. In addition, it engaged in smaller pogroms in several villages and exterminated all their Jewish inhabitants – hundreds of people, including children. Stepan Lenkavskyi, whom Ukrainian historians nowadays call "a distinguished OUN activist," assured the OUN conference that gathered in Lvov on 18 July: "As for Jews, we are taking all measures leading to their extermination."[26]

Baltic insurgents also aided the Nazi extermination of Jews, seeking to avenge the brutality of the Soviet regime and offer a favor to the "liberators" and so secure their benevolence. How far LAF and the Lithuanian provisional government served the Holocaust is unclear, but the fact of their involvement is obvious. With the beginning of *Barbarossa,* LAF proclaimed: "The crucial day of reckoning has come for the Jews at last. Lithuania must be liberated not only from the yoke of the Bolshevism, but also from the long-protracted burden of the Jewish yoke." Even before Germans entered Kaunas, a Lithuanian colonel, a commander of the insurgents during the revolt, pledged to execute 100 Jews for every German soldier killed by anti-Nazi resistance.[27] The Lithuanian provisional government issued "Regulations on the Status of Jews" on 1 August 1941.[28] This legislation did not order the extermination of Jews, but still, an agency claiming to represent the Lithuanian nation officially endorsed antisemitism. Latvian policemen ransacked Jewish shops and killed those who got in their way.[29] Some nationalist leaders were perhaps appalled by pogroms, yet thousands of insurgents enthusiastically served the Holocaust. In October 1941, the commander of *Einsatzgruppe* A, Franz

[25] Iaroslav Starukh, *Borot'ba z Moskvoiu* (1941), p. 29.

[26] Dukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag,* pp. 14, 24, 47, 51, 55, 57.

[27] George Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred: Lithuanian Nationalism during the Triple Occupation, 1939–1953," Ph.D. dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston, 2003, pp. 64, 66.

[28] Some researchers question whether this document is authentic, claiming that the Nazis might have forged the government's signatures, but they provide no proof for this view, nor do they suggest that any member of the government ever protested against this alleged forgery in the underground press. Romuald Misiunas, "Soviet Historiography on World War II and the Baltic States," in Stanley Vardys and Romuald Misiunas, eds., *The Baltic States in Peace and War* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 1978), p. 192.

[29] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler*, p. 52.

Stahlecker, reported from Kaunas that Klimaitis, the leader of a Lithuanian militia unit, "organized a Jewish pogrom. … Lithuanian partisans killed 1,500 Jews and burned or destroyed many synagogues and burned down a Jewish district with 60 houses. During the following nights, 2,300 Jews were liquidated in the same way." Another German document states: "In total, 7,800 Jews were exterminated in Kaunas. Some were killed during pogroms, others were shot by Lithuanian units."[30] George Reklaitis concludes that extermination of the Jews "involved a good number of Lithuanians, and not just small bands of criminals or virulent anti-Semites."[31]

The West Belorussians met the German Army far more coolly than the West Ukrainians or the Balts. The Belorussians' desertion rate from the Red Army was the lowest among the borderland populations: per capita, seven times as many Ukrainians as Belorussians deserted.[32] Antisemitism was alien to most Belorussians. The Germans noticed that "the sharp measures against the Jews, especially the executions, have by now considerably increased the anti-German mood." Moreover, "because of the passivity and political stupidity of the Belorussians, it has been virtually impossible to stage pogroms against the Jews."[33]

The Ukrainian and Baltic nationalists were surprised when the Germans failed to appreciate their enthusiasm in fighting the Soviets and hunting the Jews. Outraged by the attempts to proclaim Ukrainian independence, the German administration imprisoned Bandera and Stets'ko, and in September 1941 it outlawed OUN-B and arrested hundreds of its members. Ernst Kundt, the German undersecretary of state, lectured the nationalists: "Only the Führer wages war and he has no Ukrainian allies. … We are not allies, but conquerors of the Soviet territory." Although OUN-B assured the Germans that it would continue to cooperate with them despite the incarceration of its top leaders, on 25 November 1941, the German Counterintelligence Security Service *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) received an order to "immediately arrest all activists of Bandera's group and, after thorough interrogation, secretly execute [them] as bandits." In 1941–1942, the Germans jailed or killed 80 percent of OUN-B leaders.[34] The Germans tolerated OUN-M longer and even allowed it to play a minor role in the administration of several Ukrainian cities because OUN-M postponed the pursuit of its own objectives until the Axis victory,

[30] G. G. Alov, "Palachi," *VIZ* 6:20–31, 1990.

[31] Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred," p. 103.

[32] The NKVD detained only 4,406 Belorussian deserters from June 1941 to July 1944, as opposed to 128,527 Ukrainians, Leont'ev to Kruglov, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh bor'by s banditizmom [Report on the fight against banditry]" (30 August 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 63, l. 177.

[33] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 215.

[34] Volodymyr Kosyk, "Nimechchina i ukraïns'ke pytannia," in Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii viini*, pp. 173, 178; Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag*, p. 66; Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), pp. 18, 29, 32; Timothy Snyder, "The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing 1943," *Past and Present* 179:207, 2003.

betting exclusively on collaboration.[35] However, by 1942, the Germans, infuriated by OUN-M's nationalist rhetoric, removed its personnel from administrative positions and outlawed this group.

Baltic nationalists were equally disappointed. The Germans dissolved the Lithuanian provisional government six weeks after occupation. Having observed that Nazi administrators referred to Latvia as "the former Republic of Latvia" in their public orders,[36] Latvians made no attempt to organize a government, nor did Estonians. The nationalists did not view themselves as a German "fifth column" but were denied any other role. When LAF realized this in September 1941, it gave the Germans a memorandum that made an unflattering comparison between the Soviet and Nazi regimes. During the Soviet occupation, it said:

> Lithuania still existed as a sovereign republic. … Germany, whom Lithuanians helped to fight the Bolsheviks, regards the Lithuanian Republic as … an occupied enemy territory. … The Bolshevik decrees proclaimed land as state property during the nationalization, yet everyone who had it was granted its perpetual tenure. … The decree of the *Generalkommissar* makes even this perpetual tenure granted by Bolshevik law illusory. … Besides, many of those who had retained their land under the Bolsheviks now have lost it. … Thousands of efficient farmers who survived the Bolshevik era have now been driven out of agriculture. The economy damaged by the Bolsheviks disintegrates even further. … Private economic initiative is persecuted exactly as it was during the Bolshevik occupation. … Food rations for the urban population are so meagre that people starve. … Lithuanian culture is suppressed.[37]

The Germans did not tolerate such criticism. On seeing the memorandum, they outlawed LAF, sent its Kaunas leader, Leonas Prapuolenis, to the Dachau concentration camp, and kept Škirpa out of Lithuania.[38] After this crackdown, the Lithuanian and Ukrainian nationalists decided to terminate their strategic cooperation with the Nazis and pursue their own goals, even at risk of provoking the anger of the German administration. In contrast, most Latvian and Estonian nationalists continued to collaborate with the Germans hoping for their change of heart.

3.2 The German Occupation Policies

This section compares Nazi and Soviet occupation policies in order to present the context in which pro- and anti-Soviet forces interacted with local populations in 1941–1943, forming their sentiments on the eve of the Soviet reconquest of 1944. The Soviet regime sought to extend the Stalinist system to the

[35] John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 90–93, 102–103, 117.

[36] Document No. 2 in Viktor Chernov and Andrei Shliakhtunov, eds., *Pribaltiiskie Waffen-SS: geroi ili palachi?* (Moscow: Lin-Inter, 2004), p. 93.

[37] V. P. Iampol'skii, "Za chto borolis'?" *VIZ* 5:48–51, 1994.

[38] Algirdas Budreckis, "Lithuanian Resistance, 1940–1952," in Albertas Gerutis, ed., *Lithuania: 700 Years* (New York: Manyland Books, 1969), p. 331.

borderlands, yet it made no attempt to colonize these areas, and their residents had the same rights as all other Soviets, although those rights were quite limited. The Soviets based their policies on class principles. They planed no ethnic cleansing aside from the partial expulsion of diaspora ethnic groups owing to concern about separatism and paranoid fear of enemy spies. The Russian and Jewish communities in the borderlands suffered proportionately more from Soviet deportations than did the titular ethnic groups because the former contained a large number of White émigrés, whereas the latter was relatively well off.[39] The Soviets could claim for propaganda purposes that they had accomplished the nationalist dream – the unification of Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Lithuanian territories. Nationalists only talked about unification as a remote perspective but the Soviets enforced it quickly and effectively. The borderlands became union republics named after their major ethnic groups and with governments dominated by them, and the languages of the titular ethnic groups had a status equal to Russian.

The Nazis planned a far grimmer future for these regions than the Communists envisioned, especially in the Slavic territories. They intended to germanize part of the Soviet population whose presence would least damage the German race and turn a larger part into serfs to the *Herrenvolk;* as for the rest, the Economic Staff *Ost* maintained, "many millions of people" would "become superfluous" and would have "to die or move to Siberia."[40] No protectorates or autonomies were planned. Instead, the Nazis intended to include the western Soviet regions in two *Reichskommissariats: Ostland* (the Baltic region, most of Belorussia, and a part of Russia) and *Ukraine* (most of Ukraine, southern Belorussia, and a part of Russia). They partitioned Ukraine and placed Galicia in the *Generalgouvernment* Poland, a protectorate of the German empire; handed Odessa Province to Romania; and passed Transnistria to Romanian temporary administration. Hitler intended to make the whole Baltic region a province of the German empire.[41] The local self-administrations established by Germans in the Baltic territories in the end of 1941 were advisory bodies limited to minor affairs, with even less authority than the Soviet Baltic governments had exercised. The Germans treated ethnic groups in accordance with their position on the Nazi scale of racial value, with Jews and Gypsies at the bottom and above them, in order, Russians, Belorussians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians.[42] Jews and Gypsies were to be annihilated; for the rest, the

[39] Rudite Viksne, "Soviet Repressions against Residents of Latvia in 1940–1941," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, pp. 55, 56; Irene Šneidere, "The First Soviet Occupation Period in Latvia," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, p. 41.

[40] V. I. Dashichev, ed., '*Sovershenno sekretno! Tol'ko dlia kommandovaniia'* (Moscow: Nauka, 1967), p. 100.

[41] Document No. 8 in Dashichev, *'Sovershenno sekretno!'* p. 106; Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 184.

[42] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, pp. 184, 201.

proportion of those marked for extermination and exile decreased from the bottom to the top of the racial pyramid. The General Plan *Ost* developed by May 1942 stipulated an extermination and deportation to Siberia of 75 percent of Belorussians, 65 percent of western Ukrainians, and lesser proportions of the Balts.[43]

The Nazis planned to make the eastern colonies an agrarian appendage of the German empire. They preserved *kolkhozes,* believing that agrarian reform could disrupt production, whereas the collective farm system might ease the transfer of peasants from Communist to German serfs. German Minister of Agriculture Herbert Backe remarked that had the Soviets not established collective farms, Germans would have had to invent them.[44] An agrarian reform announced by the *Reichsminister* Alfred Rosenberg in February 1942, as Alexander Dallin writes:

> … was nullified by procrastination in application and by the impression of deceit that it evoked. … The very plan for making the East into a gigantic colony, and the corresponding methods and attitudes of the German officialdom doomed the agrarian policy to failure. … Both by their plans and their practices the occupying authorities aroused against themselves the largest segment of the Soviet society.[45]

Because few *kolkhozes* existed in the frontier provinces, the German failure to eliminate them affected the borderlands less than the old Soviet territories. However, in western Ukraine and Belorussia, the new invaders set higher taxes than had the Soviet regime, and they engaged in endless requisitions. Erich Koch, *Reichskommissar* of Ukraine, believed that "if this people [Ukrainian] works ten hours daily, it will have to work eight hours for us." In many regions, the Germans doubled the 1941 Soviet quotas of obligatory agricultural deliveries.[46]

The German administration established a mandatory two-year labor duty in Germany. Initially, it recruited young laborers on a voluntary basis, but as that flow quickly dried up, it resorted to the conscription of whole age groups. This caused universal resentment and draft evasion. In Ukraine and Belorussia, Germans burned down entire villages if men and women failed to report. In total, 2,792,669 Soviet laborers were shipped to Germany, including 2,196,166 from Ukraine – of those, 400,000 were from its western regions.[47] This draft affected all but the Polish farmers more than the Soviet deportations of 1940–1941. By July 1944, 75,000 laborers were conscripted

[43] Document No. 9 in Dashichev, *'Sovershenno sekretno!'* pp. 112, 113, 115; Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 277.

[44] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 322.

[45] Ibid., pp. 371, 372.

[46] Ibid., pp. 143, 375; Bohdan Krawchenko, "Soviet Ukraine under Nazi Occupation 1941–1944," in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, p. 27.

[47] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 452; David R. Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s* (Edmonton, Canada: University of Alberta Press, 1992), p. 52.

in Lithuania, four times as many as the Soviets had deported in 1941, and 35,000 in Latvia, twice the number of Latvians exiled by the Soviets.[48]

The Nazis responded to armed resistance with indiscriminate brutality. Soviet sources claim that they destroyed 250 villages and all their inhabitants in Ukraine during their counterinsurgency campaigns, mainly in its eastern part.[49] The Nazis placed Belorussians near the bottom of their scale of racial hierarchy, just above Russians and below Ukrainians, and their occupation policy reflected these values. Belorussia suffered more than any other Soviet region during the German occupation: a quarter of its population died.[50] Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel imposed the practice of collective responsibility for attacks against Germans, ordering that from 50 to 100 Communist hostages be shot for every German soldier killed.[51] In the absence of Communists, as typically was the case in the western countryside, the Nazis shot any hostages. The Soviets, conversely, never exterminated entire villages in the borderlands, and they deported hostages rather than killing them.

German policy was more lenient in Baltic than in Slavic regions, yet in some respects it was harsher than Soviet rule. Many more peasants lost their land during the German occupation than during the first Soviet one. The Germans confiscated land from those who had received it after the Soviet reform and ordered farmers to pay both the old debts annulled by the Soviets and the new loans provided by the Soviet government. Those who lost their lots were assigned to wealthier farmers as agricultural laborers and had no right to leave them. The Germans did not return confiscated land to the former owners because they intended to establish huge estates managed by German colonists after exiling a large number of Balts. Instead, they preserved Soviet legislation on nationalization but let the former owners use their fields temporarily. Prices for agricultural products were fixed and low, and taxes were much heavier than those the Balts had paid during the independence period; it is hard to compare them with those announced by the Soviet government in 1941 because they had different principles. In Estonia, cultivated acreage fell by 40 percent during the German occupation.[52] The German administration passed some reconfiscated land to German veterans and other colonists who were to "aryanize" the Baltic regions. It planned to bring 200,000 German settlers into the Baltic region during the first stage of colonization. The Eastern Company was formed in Holland to enlist Dutch

[48] Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States* (London: Hurst & Co, 1993), p. 354; Eugenijus Grunskis, ed., *Lietuvos gyventoju tremimai 1940–1941, 1945–1953 metais* (Vilnius: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1996), p. 200; "Meropriiatiia po vyseleniiu iavlialis' chrezvychainoi meroi," *Istochnik* 1:138, 1996.

[49] Krawchenko, "Soviet Ukraine under Nazi Occupation," p. 27.

[50] V. A. Zolotarev and G. N. Sevost 'ianov, eds., *Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina, 1941–1945*, Vol. 4 (Moscow: Nauka, 1999), p. 267.

[51] Document No. 56 in Dashichev, *'Sovershenno sekretno!'* p. 396.

[52] M. A. Rutkovskii, "Okkupatsionnaia politika gitlerovskoi Germanii v baltiiskoi derevne v 1941–1945," *Rossiiskii istoricheskii zhurnal* 2:31–33, 1998; Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, p. 165.

willing to replace Balts and Belorussians. By August 1943, 28,435 colonists had arrived in Lithuania, including 4,500 to 5,000 Dutchmen.[53] This influx caused fear among Baltic farmers. Only after the war turned against the Axis in 1943 did the Germans return land as private property to 12 percent of Estonian and 4 percent of Lithuanian farmers.[54] The Nazis forbade the Independence Day celebrations and renamed old historical streets in the Baltic capitals into Adolf-Hitler Alee, Alfred-Rosenberg Ring, Hermann-Göring Strasse, Hindenburgpark, and Freikorpsstrasse.[55]

Germany's handling of religious matters in the occupied Soviet regions was less disastrous than its other policies, but it was nonetheless "beset by inconsistency, contradiction, and petty bureaucratic bickering."[56] The Orthodox hierarchy of the borderlands that had just reunited with the Russian Orthodox Church showed its attitude toward the Soviet regime when all bishops serving in western Ukraine but one preferred to stay instead of evacuating with the retreating Red Army.[57] Hierarchs of other denominations were even more anti-Soviet and hoped that the Germans would restore freedom of religion. Most German administrators adopted a two-prong policy in the occupied lands: As a public relations exercise, they let religious activists reopen the churches closed by the Communists, and they also encouraged all sort of schisms in the Slavic regions. The Head Department of State Security maintained "the religious activities of the population should neither be facilitated nor obstructed."[58] Believers still preferred this policy to Communist-sponsored atheism. In Ukraine, 40 percent of the churches closed after 1917 were reopened during the German occupation, and by its end, 5,633 Orthodox, 2,326 Uniate, 500 Ukrainian Autocephalous, and 652 Roman Catholic churches operated in the entire territory of Ukraine.[59]

The second aspect of the religious policy, the encouragement of schisms, stemmed from the Nazi intention to seed disunity among the Soviet people in order to more easily subdue them. As Hitler explained in April 1942: "It would simply be in our interest if each village had its own sect, which developed its

[53] Albertas Gerutis, ed., *Lithuania: 700 Years* (New York: Manyland Books, 1969), p. 291; Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 2, p. 527; Rutkovskii, "Okkupatsionnaia politika," p. 33; A. A. Faktorovich, *Krakh agrarnoi politiki nemetsko-fashistskikh okkupantov v Belorussii* (Minsk: Nauka i tekhnika, 1979), p. 59.

[54] Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians,* p. 164; Rutkovskii, "*Okkupatsionnaia politika,*" p. 34.

[55] Documents No. 87 and 89 in Elmars Pelakus, ed., *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia* (Riga: Nordik, 1999), pp. 191, 194–196.

[56] Harvey Fireside, *Icon and Swastika: The Russian Orthodox Church under the Nazi and Soviet Control* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 72.

[57] John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (Englewood: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1990), p. 148.

[58] Olga Vasil'eva, "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' v politike sovetskogo gosudarstva," Ph.D. dissertation, Moscow State University, 1998, p. 139.

[59] Anatolii S. Chaikovskii, "Pomoshch' sovetskogo tyla v organizatsii partizanskoi bor'by protiv fashistskikh zakhvatchikov na vremenno okkupirovannoi territorii SSSR 1941–1944," Ph.D. dissertation, Moscow State University, 1991, p. 217.

own concept of God."[60] Since the Baltic ethnic groups were small and their simple identity offered only weak links to the Soviet state, the Nazis took a hands-off approach to the Catholic and Lutheran churches dominating the Baltic region. In the Slavic lands, however, the Germans attempted to use religion as a means to divide the large Ukrainian and Belorussian ethnic groups, the majority of whom had nested identities – that is, they perceived themselves as Soviets first and Ukrainians and Belorussians second. This majority lived in the old territories, yet the Nazis sought to prevent the formation of a common identity between western and eastern Ukrainians and Belorussians and to split those living in the old territories. After Nikolai (Iarushevich), Orthodox Exarch of Ukraine and Belorussia, evacuated with the Soviets, in December 1941, the bishops remaining in occupied Ukraine, in agreement with canon law, elected Archbishop Aleksii (Gromadskii) as Metropolitan and provisionally acting head of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine, to be called hereafter the Autonomous Ukrainian Church. The church acknowledged the supremacy of the Moscow Patriarchate.[61] However, Rosenberg supported the initiative of a small minority of the Orthodox hierarchy to restore the Autocephalous Orthodox Ukrainian Church that had operated in Soviet Ukraine between 1921 and 1930 as a means to withdraw Ukrainians from the influence of the Moscow Patriarchate. These few bishops hastily consecrated several new bishops and separated in February 1942 as the Autocephalous Ukrainian Church,[62] independent of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Autocephalous Church was rooted in western Ukraine, and its leaders were radical nationalists. However, Orthodox hierarchs elsewhere regarded the way the Autocephalous bishops were consecrated as uncanonical, and no other Orthodox church ratified it. Subsequently, most Ukrainian believers viewed this church as illegitimate. Many more Orthodox Ukrainians remained within the Autonomous Church than moved to its Autocephalous splinter.[63] The two churches were in permanent conflict.[64] As Hans Koch, a former German intelligence officer, recalled, "There was no German over-all policy towards the Church. In effect, each district commissar decided for himself. Often, perhaps too systematically to be by an accident, neighboring areas adopted contrary policies; this seemed to be an implementation of the '*divide et impera*' pattern." As a result, the Germans "proved never able to cash in on the political benefits of turning the churches into active allies."[65]

The Germans quickly wasted the amount of the good will they enjoyed initially. Having found themselves in the midst of a fierce fight between two totalitarian states, the people of the borderlands had to choose sides. While most focused on their own survival, a part of the politically active minority

[60] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika*, p. 95.
[61] Ibid., p. 149; Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 484.
[62] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika*, p. 151.
[63] Vasil'eva, "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov'," 153.
[64] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, pp. 152–156.
[65] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika*, pp. 52, 96.

collaborated with the Germans, another part attempted to pursue nationalist goals, and some supported the Red partisans who increasingly penetrated the borderlands beginning in 1942. The proportion of those who collaborated with the Germans, the Soviets, and the nationalists varied by region and time and depended on the contrast between Soviet and German regional occupation policies, the strength of local nationalism, the social strain accumulated before World War II, the relative prosperity of the people, and the situation on the fronts. Despite the disappointment with the Germans, many Ukrainian and Lithuanian nationalists and most Latvian, Estonian, and Belorussian nationalists cooperated with Germany throughout the war. Although some did so wholeheartedly, most simply regarded the Nazis as the lesser evil.

3.3 German and Soviet Collaborators during the German Occupation

This section analyzes the essence and degree of popular participation in the German and Soviet military efforts in the borderlands. It focuses on collaborators – those who actually fought for German or Soviet objectives – rather than those who viewed temporary cooperation with either great power as an avenue for attaining their own political goals. Collaboration shaped the local societies during the German occupation; it affected the balance of power between the pro- and anti-Soviet forces on the eve of the Soviet reconquest, and it was an important factor in the subsequent struggle between the nationalists and the Soviet state because many German collaborators ended up in the nationalist resistance, whereas the Soviet collaborators became a pillar of the Soviet regime.

All major nationalist groups, except *Armija Krajowa* (AK), hoped the Germans would allow them to organize their national armies, which would fight the Soviet Union as Axis members. Thousands volunteered to join the police battalions – the first collaborator military units organized by the Germans. However, the German administration did not allow collaborators to pursue any other agenda but its own and often sent these units to fight outside their native regions, where their soldiers could not even entertain the thought that they defended the interests of their nations. The Germans disbanded *Nachtigall* and *Roland* battalions in August 1941 and afterward moved their personnel, containing many OUN members, to Belorussia, where they fought partisans. These soldiers faithfully served Germany for 17 months after the arrest of the top OUN-B leaders until Germans disbanded them. In 1943, the Germans raised the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS Galizien* Division with the help of OUN-M. It was crushed three weeks after its arrival at the front in June 1944, and then its remnants suppressed insurgencies in Slovakia and Slovenia.[66] Himmler officially forbade reference to *Galizien* as Ukrainian, and only on 19 April 1945 did that word become a part of its title.[67]

[66] Yurkevich, "Galician Ukrainians," pp. 72, 78, 80.

[67] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 599; K. E. Dmitruk, *Svastika na sutanakh* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1976), p. 127.

Most Balts preferred the Germans to the Soviets as an occupying force, and many wholeheartedly collaborated. The Baltic police battalions consisted mainly of nationalist volunteers. Latvia and Estonia gave Germany many more collaborators per capita than other borderland regions. Latvian units fought around Lake Il'men' in Russia, in Ukraine, and in Crimea; Estonians did the same in Belorussia, Ukraine, and Stalingrad; and Lithuanians did so in Belorussia and Ukraine.[68] The Latvian administration raised 48 police battalions, some of which were later reorganized into two *Waffen-SS* divisions. By 1 July 1944, 85,550 Latvians were enlisted in the SS, with another 61,060 as auxiliaries in the German forces, which constituted 8 percent of Latvian population, a top proportion among the countries that supplied German collaborators.[69] Three times as many Latvian citizens fought for the Germans as for the Soviets; only 57,470 Latvians joined the Red Army.[70] In Estonia, the self-administration organized a *Waffen-SS* legion in October 1942, transformed into a *Waffen-SS* division in May 1944. Along with police battalions that operated since the beginning of the German occupation, the Estonian collaborators numbered between 50,000 to 60,000 men at that time, five times larger than the regular army of independent Estonia. After the influx of volunteers dried up, the Germans resorted to conscription, and the self-administrations obediently drafted Balts, threatening those who failed to report with "punishment according to martial law." Yet many Latvian and Estonian soldiers fought for the Axis with enthusiasm. Indeed, the Latvian 19th *Waffen-SS* Division stubbornly defended Courland until Germany surrendered; whereas a unit from the Latvian 15th *Waffen-SS* Division guarded Hitler's bunker in Berlin during his last days. About 50,000 Latvians died while fighting on German side, 10 times as many as the number of those who died fighting for the Soviets.[71] Lithuanian nationalists, by contrast, called on recruits to evade German conscriptions. No unit larger than a police battalion was ever organized. By January 1945, 36,800 Lithuanians organized in 21 police battalions fought for the Germans.[72] The largest Baltic state thus gave the Germans the smallest number of collaborators.

[68] Colonel Khlopov, "Dislokatsiia nemetskikh politseiskikh chastei [Location of German police units]" (15 October 1941), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 730, ll. 89–98; Semiriaga, *Kollaboratsionizm*, p. 838.

[69] Document No. 178 in Chernov and Shliakhtunov, *Pribaltiiskie Waffen-SS,* p. 116; Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia*, p. 180.

[70] Along with Soviet citizens of Latvian descent, about 100,000 Latvians fought in the ranks of the Red Army; Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia*, pp. 180, 223.

[71] Document No. 23 in Chernov and Shliakhtunov, *Pribaltiiskie Waffen-SS,* p. 131; Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 927; Visvaldis Mangulis, *Latvia in the Wars of the 20th Century* (Princeton Junction, NJ: Cognition Books, 1983), p. xiii, 116; Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians*, p. 157; Alov, "*Palachi,*" p. 32; Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia*, p. 180; Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 356.

[72] Chernov and Shliakhtunov, *Pribaltiiskie Waffen-SS,* p. 26; Helmut Heiber and David Glantz, eds., *Hitler and His Generals: Military Conferences, 1942–1945* (New York: Enigma Books, 2003), p. 856.

All these collaborators fought only for the German objectives. The Baltic police units were officially subordinated to their self-administrations as long as they operated within their native regions and could perceive themselves as serving their national governments, but the Ukrainian and Belorussian collaborators were denied even this self-deluding option. However, in western Ukraine, nationalistic individuals could join the nationalist resistance as an alternative to collaboration; in the Baltic region, no such resistance existed.

The collaborators committed numerous war crimes. Between 1,000 and 1,200 Estonian *Omakaitse* paramilitaries were members of execution squads who killed Soviet POWs, Jews, and other arrested civilians on a regular basis.[73] Many more guarded Estonian concentration camps, where half the Soviet POWs died within six months between 1 December 1941 and 1 June 1942.[74] In the beginning of the German occupation, German collaborators spent most of their energy on the hunt for Jews. The Ukrainian auxiliary police were the major native Holocaust perpetrator in Soviet territory. These police participated in the extermination of 150,000 Jews in Volhynia alone. Assisted by these enthusiastic antisemites, the Nazis killed 98 percent of the West Ukrainian Jews.[75] OUN was uninvolved in the operations of the auxiliary police, yet it encouraged its members to join the police in order to acquire military training and weapons. Leonid Stupnyts'kii, a top OUN military officer, had run the Ukrainian police school before he joined the nationalists; G. Reshetin, commander of a nationalist guerrilla battalion, had served as a district police chief in Pochaev; and Iaroslav Diakon, head of the nationalist security service in Lvov region, had been the town police chief in Bobrka. In March and April 1943, policemen defected en masse to nationalist guerrillas.[76] Therefore, guerrilla units contained many who had perpetrated the Holocaust. As Timothy Snyder observes, "Former policemen brought [to nationalist guerrillas] not only their SS training and their weapons, but irreplaceable experience of co-ordinated murder of designated populations."[77] This produced grave repercussions for OUN strategy.

In the Baltic region, too, the police actively helped the Nazis to exterminate nearly all the Jews. At least 20 Lithuanian, 4 Estonian, and 4 Latvian police battalions participated directly in the Holocaust.[78] Lithuanians are proud

[73] Paavle, "Soviet Investigations," p. 677.

[74] Meelis Maripuu, "Soviet Prisoners of War in Estonia," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 751.

[75] Snyder, "The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing 1943," p. 211; Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 270.

[76] Stupnyts'kii was chief of staff of the UPA-North; I. Kompanets, Secretary of Ternopol Provincial Party Committee, to Khrushchev, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]," TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1702, l. 6; Galiguzov, "Spravka [Information]" (30 September 1943), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 132, l. 469; A. V. Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia v 1942–1943 rr* (Kyiv, 1999), pp. 39, 59; Document No. 73 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 6 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia Nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), p. 409.

[77] Snyder, "The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing 1943," p. 211.

[78] Karlis Kangeris, "'Closed' Units of Latvian Police – Lettische Scutzmannschafts-Battaillone," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, pp. 109, 110.

that their country was one of the two among those occupied by the Nazis where there were not enough volunteers to organize an SS unit. However, Lithuanian police units, consisting in 1941 of nationalist volunteers, often acted exactly like SS *Einsatzgruppen*. On 27 October 1941, a Lithuanian police battalion killed the Jewish population of Slutsk in Belorussia despite protests from *Gebietskommissar* Heinrich Carl, who wanted to spare skilled Jewish labor. This Nazi administrator was appalled by the atrocities committed by Lithuanian policemen. He wrote that Impuliavičius, the commander of the battalion

> ... had an order of his superiors to cleanse from the town all the Jews without exception, as he had done in other towns. ... They acted as sadists. ... There were piles of corpses of executed Jews in some streets. Before they were murdered, they – even women and children – were brutally beaten with anything hands could reach: sticks, rubber hoses and gun butts. ... This was utter barbarism. ... They robbed also many Belorussian homes. They took everything they liked: shoes, leather, cloths, gold and other valuables. *Wehrmacht* soldiers reported that they [Lithuanian policemen] pulled rings from fingers along with the skin.[79]

Karl Jäger, commander of SS *Einsatzkommando* 3, reported on 19 September 1941 that the operations assisted by Lithuanians accounted for 47,000 of the 85,000 *Einsatzkommando* killings of Lithuanian citizens, mainly Jews.[80] In addition, Lithuanian police slaughtered over 50,000 Belorussian Jews during the war.[81]

The national guards and police in Latvia and Estonia also hunted Jews. Most Latvian Jews who died under the Nazi occupation and those transported to Latvia from Austria, Hungary, and Germany were killed by Latvians rather than Germans.[82] The notorious Latvian Arajs Commando Unit with 3,000 men, led by the lawyer Viktors Arajs, killed 26,000 and indirectly facilitated the extermination of 34,000 civilians, mainly Jews. The 18th Latvian Police Battalion, commanded by Major Rubenis, executed all Jews in the Belorussian Slonim town in the summer of 1942.[83] These executioners were mostly former *Aizsargi* members and soldiers of the Latvian Army.[84]

[79] Document No. 118 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 2, p. 561; V. N. Andianov et al., *Voina v tylu vraga* (Moscow: Izfdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1974), p. 439.

[80] Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews,* Vol. 1 (New York: Holmes & Mayer, 1985), p. 313.

[81] Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 2, p. 528.

[82] Document No. 113 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 2, p. 553; Henriks Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands in den Jahren des Kommunismus (1940–1990)," *Acta Baltica* 29/30:91, 1991–1992.

[83] Andianov et al., *Voina v tylu vraga*, pp. 440, 441; Aivars Stranga, "The Holocaust in Occupied Latvia, 1941–1945," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, p. 167; Document No. 36 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom*, p. 132.

[84] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler*, p. 59.

In 1941–1942, German collaborators, scores of whom later joined the anti-Communist resistance, killed many more people in every borderland region except Estonia than did the Soviets throughout the entire period of their struggle against nationalists from 1939 to the 1950s. However, since the Soviet regime used class rather than ethnic criteria for its repressions, most of its victims belonged to the ethnic majority. In contrast, most of those killed by the Nazis and their collaborators, at least in the Baltic region, were Jewish. The Balts were largely indifferent to the plight of the Jews or even approved the Holocaust. The Soviet official noted later that in Latvia, "… even now many people see nothing outrageous in the extermination of Jews during the occupation" when 70,000 Latvian and 20,000 other Jews shipped to Latvia were slaughtered but mark the fourteenth of June as a day of national mourning because on this date in 1941 the Soviet regime deported and arrested 15,171 Latvians, most of whom survived.[85] Typically, when a handful of Latvian nationalists organized the Latvian Central Council, a political underground agency claiming to be oriented toward the Western Allies, its major anti-Nazi statement issued in August 1943 accused the Germans of killing 10,000 Latvians but said nothing about the plight of Latvian Jews and Gypsies.[86]

Apart from the Holocaust, Baltic police battalions performed mainly counterinsurgency missions. They conducted these operations in the style set by the Nazis. Of 48 Latvian police battalions, 26 engaged in counterinsurgency in Belorussia and "have remained in the historic memory of the Belorussian people … as members of punitive expeditions … conspicuous by their ruthlessness."[87] In an operation called "Winter Magic," they burned down between 15 and 26 Belorussian villages and executed scores of civilians, some of them burned alive in locked buildings.[88] Latvian police units also killed all 235 inhabitants of the Latvian village of Audrini and 47 persons in the village of Morduki in retaliation for sheltering partisans.[89] Friedrich Schwung, *Gebietskommissar* in Latgale, commented: "Latvian policemen almost all

[85] Bumbers, chair of the Radio Committee of Latvia, "Otchet o prodelannoi rabote [Report on work]" (2 April 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 3, l. 33; Document No. 254 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 1, Book 2, p. 247; Stranga, "The Holocaust in Occupied Latvia," p. 161. Of all Latvians deported in 1941, over 1,900 died; Janis Riekstins, "The 14 June 1941 Deportation in Latvia," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, p. 72.

[86] Document No. 105 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* p. 217.

[87] Kangeris, "'Closed' Units of Latvian Police," pp. 110, 113.

[88] "Soobshcheniie sekretariu TsK KP(b) Latvii Kalnberzinu [Report for Kalnberziņš, the Secretary of the CC of the Latvian Communist party]" (after April 1943), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 135, l. 118; V. F. Shauro et al., eds., *Vsenarodnoe partisanskoe dvizhenie v Belorussii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny. Dokumenty i materialy,* Book 2, Vol. 1 (Minsk: Belarus', 1967), p. 172; Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 108.

[89] Documents No. 7 and 8 in Chernov and Shliakhtunov, *Pribaltiiskie Waffen-SS,* pp. 97, 98. Official Internet sites of the Latvian government mention these slaughters but do not say who killed the villagers.

have a bit of sadism in their blood."[90] The Estonian self-administration raised over 20 police battalions. Of them, 7 were guarding Estonian concentration camps; 12 engaged in antipartisan operations in Russia, Belorussia, and Poland; and 3 conducted deportations to Germany and Estonia and food requisitions. During a counterinsurgency campaign in the Russian Pskov Province, the 37th and 40th Estonian Police Battalions were parts of the 207th German Security Division. Its reports state that it executed 93 percent of the arrested partisan suspects and suspected partisan sympathizers among civilians in 1942 and 81 percent in 1943 – in total, 541 persons. The 288th Estonian Police Battalion burned down 30 Belorussian villages.[91]

Unlike many Balts and West Ukrainians, West Belorussians mostly abstained from collaboration. Rosenberg observed that "no positive elements with whom we could cooperate exist in Belorussia." *Ordnungsdienst,* the German auxiliary police, resorted to a compulsory draft of Belorussians, enforced by taking hostages from the families of eligible men. The police units so organized were fused into the least enthusiastic of all *Waffen-SS* divisions.[92]

Ecclesiastic collaborators, mainly from the Ukrainian Autocephalous and Uniate clergy, joined their secular counterparts. Illarion (Ogienko), Archbishop of Kholm from the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, donated the bell of the Kholm cathedral to the Germans in 1941; he sent Easter greetings to Governor Hans Frank in 1942 and conducted liturgy on the occasion of Hitler's birthday in April 1943.[93] Metropolitan Polykarp (Sikorskyi), Primate of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, prompted Ukrainians to report for German labor draft and help them "to eradicate Jewish Communism within the shortest possible time."[94] Andrei Sheptyts'kyi, Primate of the Uniate Church in Ukraine since 1901, called on his flock "to help the German Army as much as possible" and assured Hitler in a series of personal letters that he was praying for the German victory and that Uniates would promote the cooperation with Germany better than other denominations.[95] On 23 September 1941, several days after the *Wehrmacht* captured Kiev and a week before the Nazis massacred 33,000 Jews in Babii Yar, Sheptyts'kyi sent a letter to Hitler, in which he wrote:

> I offer your Excellency my heartiest congratulations on conquering the capital of Ukraine. … We regard you as the invincible commander of the unmatched and glorious German Army. The whole Christian community is grateful to Your Excellency for the

[90] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 91.

[91] Aivar Niglas and Tooman Hiio, "Estonian Defence Battalions," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 845; Paavle, "Soviet Investigations," pp. 877–883.

[92] Semiriaga, *Kollaboratsionizm,* p. 234; Beria to Stalin (29 June 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 65, ll. 271, 272.

[93] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika*, p. 150.

[94] Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia*, p. 72.

[95] K. E. Dmitruk, *Uniatskie krestonostsy vchera i segodnia* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1976), pp. 248, 251; Documents No. 199 and 200 in V. Iu. Malanchuk et al., eds., *Pravda pro Uniiu. Dokumenty i materialy* (L'viv: Kameniar, 1968), pp. 310, 312; Fireside, *Icon and Swastika*, p. 104.

destruction and eradication of Bolshevism that you, the Führer of the Great German Reich, pursue in this campaign. … I am praying to God to give you victory that will bring long peace to Your Excellency, the German Army and the German people.[96]

Like other West Ukrainians, the hierarchs of these churches soon were disappointed with the Nazis, yet Sheptyts'kyi continued to write similar letters to Hitler, in which he supported "the new order in Ukraine and entire Eastern Europe."[97] Dr. Frederik, representative of the German security service in Galicia, called Sheptyts'kyi "the only significant leader who is really ready to use his prestige in the interest of Germany. He has already served us well in the past and will serve in the future."[98] The Uniate Church played an important role in the raising of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* Division in April 1943. Archbishop Iosif Slipyi signed a petition addressed to the governor Frank about the enlistment of volunteers.[99] Uniate priest Vasyl' Laba, with the approval of Sheptyts'kyi, blessed the division in July 1943 and became its chief chaplain. He compared the SS soldiers with the Crusaders who had fought for the liberation of the Holy Land.[100] Soon these "crusaders," together with the German SS, reportedly destroyed several Polish villages along with hundreds of their residents, many burned alive.[101]

To be sure, the clerics of the Ukrainian Autocephalous and Uniate churches pursued their own goals while actively serving the Germans. The German religious policy, more lenient than the Soviet one, created better conditions for the expansion of these two churches. However, since public opinion in the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine turned against the Germans, the prestige of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, modest from the beginning because of its dubious canonical legitimacy, was further undermined by its consistent collaboration. In Galicia, where German policy was milder, the Uniate Church retained much of its prestige. Sensing which way the wind was blowing by the end of the German occupation, the church attempted to distance itself from the Germans, and Sheptyts'kyi even came to believe that "the arrival of the Bolsheviks will possibly have the beneficial effect of ending the anarchy that exists today in the entire country."[102]

The increasing hostility of the borderland population to the German administration allowed Soviet partisans to penetrate the western regions. The attitude of people toward the Red partisans during the German occupation revealed their feelings toward Soviet authority. The partisans made their first shallow intrusions into western Ukraine from Belorussia in the summer of

[96] Dmitruk, *Uniatskie krestonostsy*, pp. 248, 251.
[97] V. Zarechnyi, "Al'ians: OUN – SS," *VIZ* 4:62, 1991; Fireside, *Icon and Swastika*, p. 104.
[98] Dmitruk, *Uniatskie krestonostsy*, p. 256.
[99] Document No. 245 in Malanchuk et al., *Pravda pro Uniiu,* p. 364.
[100] Documents No. 234 and 239 in Malanchuk et al., *Pravda pro Uniiu,* pp. 349, 354.
[101] Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth*, pp. 309–311.
[102] Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State* (Edmonton, Canada: CIUS, 1996), p. 63.

1942.[103] They could not establish a base there because the population was indifferent or hostile. Sen'gora, partisan commander, reported: "The partisan units that enter these provinces live in unbearable conditions; they are ambushed and permanently attacked by large bands. Most of the population – old men, women and teenagers – are hostile to the partisans and they are informers of the nationalist bands."[104] However, with time, the German occupation policy aroused such hatred among Ukrainians that some started to sympathize with anyone who fought the Nazis. By March 1943, 12,632 Red partisans were operating in Ukraine, 1,049 of them in its western regions. By January 1944, their number in Ukraine had doubled.[105] Although fewer than the nationalists, the partisans were far more active. Nationalists concentrated on defensive actions near their homes, whereas Red partisan brigades penetrated deep into western Ukraine. In 1943, the partisans controlled large regions in Polesie, Volhynia, and Transcarpathian Ukraine. Partisan commissars attempted to soften the image of the Soviet regime among peasants. They denied that the Soviet government would begin collectivization in the borderlands and claimed that it planned major political reforms that would make the Soviet system milder than it had been in 1939–1941. Ukrainian nationalists were surprised to find that "the pro-Bolshevik sentiment in villages has risen notably" and that "the people became so hostile to the Germans that had the [Red] partisans returned, half [the population] would have joined them."[106] Hundreds of peasants in fact enlisted in raiding Red partisan brigades. The unit led by Mikhail Naumov started its deep raid into western Ukraine with 1,560 men and women. It suffered 542 casualties, but 515 local volunteers joined it there.[107] The peasants sympathetic to the Communists remained a small minority, but the deep raids of large and well-equipped partisan brigades with high morale impressed many people enough to keep them neutral in the conflict between nationalists and the Soviets.

In early 1942, Himmler claimed, "[S]ince Belorussians have no nationalist sentiments … they are the least dangerous to us out of all peoples in the eastern regions." He was wrong: Anti-Nazi resistance was more active in Belorussia than elsewhere. Even in June 1942, when the victory of the Red Army seemed remote, SD reported that Belorussians "give almost no help to the German administration in intelligence collection and punitive actions against partisans, even if they resent them." By the fall of 1942, partisans operated all over

[103] On partisan actions in the borderlands, see Alexander Statiev, "Was *Smuglianka* a Lunatic or a *Siguranţa's* Agent-Provocateur? Peculiarities of the Soviet Partisan Struggle in the Western Borderlands," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31(5):743–769, 2008.

[104] Sen'gora (no date), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 44, l. 633.

[105] Semiriaga, *Kollaboratsionizm*, pp. 833–835; Document No. 283 in V. A. Zolotarev and G. N. Sevost'ianov, eds., *Russkii arkhiv. Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina 1941–1945*, Vol. 9 (Moscow: Terra, 1999), p. 456.

[106] Document No. 148 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 2, p. 303; "Zvit Ch.6 [Report no. 6]" (19 July–3 August 1943), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 46, d. 833, l. 474.

[107] Mikhail Naumov, *Zapadnyi reid* (Kiev: Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1985), p. 272.

Belorussia, including its western-most part, Brest Province.[108] Indiscriminate German violence made people flee their homes. Since no nationalist resistance existed in Belorussia, refugees hiding from the Germans in the forests joined the only viable anti-Nazi force, the partisans. A German report summarized the philosophy of Belorussian peasants: "If I stay with the Germans, I shall be shot when the Bolsheviks come; if the Bolsheviks don't come, I shall be shot sooner or later by the Germans. Thus, if I stay with the Germans, it means certain death; if I join the partisans, I shall probably save myself." By 18 November 1942, 45,002 partisans were fighting in Belorussia, more than in the entire Russian Federation (42,758) and seven times as many as in Ukraine (6,350).[109] However, partisans found strong support mainly in eastern Belorussia. Western Belorussians tolerated them but preferred to stay neutral until the Central Belorussian Rada, a puppet self-administration hastily established by the Germans, declared mobilization into the collaborator Belorussian Regional Defence Force in March 1944.[110] In order to escape the draft, 17,000 eligible young men fled to the partisans, and only then did the partisan movement in western Belorussia become native.[111]

The Baltic lands remained free of partisans throughout most of the war. German occupation policy in the Baltic area was not so harsh as to foster armed resistance. The Nazis abstained from the looting and murders practiced in the Slavic regions but retaliated for armed resistance in their usual way. When Soviet partisans ambushed Germans near Lithuanian Pirčiupis Village, all 119 of its residents were burned alive.[112] Since life under German occupation was bearable, the Balts resented partisans, often robbing wealthier peasants and provoking German reprisals.

The Red partisans started raiding the Baltic region from Russia and Belorussia after the summer of 1942 but could establish permanent bases there only a year later. Few Balts joined the partisans in 1943. By 1944, 234 partisans were fighting in Estonia, 856 in Latvia, and 1,633 in Lithuania. Of all Baltic partisans whose ethnic origin was known to Central Partisan Headquarters, Russians and Belorussians made up 19.7 percent of the Estonian, 20.7 percent of the Lithuanian, and 52.6 percent of the Latvian units. No native volunteers joined the partisans in Estonia; all Estonians who fought in these units were Red Army or NKVD personnel. The partisans could not establish permanent bases in Estonia and reported that "it is dangerous to visit a village where even

[108] Document No. 9 in Dashichev, *'Sovershenno sekretno!'* p. 116; Shauro et al., *Vsenarodnoe partisanskoe dvizhenie*, Vol. 1, p. 375; Fedotov to Ponomarenko (17 October 1942), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 747, ll. 57–60.

[109] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 219; Document No. 110 in Zolotarev, ed., *Russkii arkhiv*, pp. 167–168.

[110] Bulganin to Stalin (15 July 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 66, l. 17.

[111] G. A. Shubin, *Iz istorii vsenarodnoi bor'by protiv nemetsko-fashistskikh okkupantov v zapadnykh oblastiakh Belorussii* (Volgograd: Nizhne-Volzhskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo 1972), pp. 267, 274, 281.

[112] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 70.

one Estonian or Finnish family lives."[113] Soldiers and NKVD officers made up 18.9 percent of Latvian and 16.8 percent of Lithuanian units. Only in Lithuania did most partisans – 67.3 percent – come from the local population.[114]

Many more Balts volunteered for the auxiliary police that fought Red partisans and hunted Soviet soldiers who escaped the POW camps. *Omakaitse,* a mainly rural security network organized on a territorial principle and subordinated to the German *Ordnungsdienst,* grew from 9,175 men and women in July 1941 to 43,757 by January 1942 and to 73,190 in September 1944, after membership in it became compulsory for every male ineligible for army draft. In 1942–1943, 9 percent of all Estonian men joined *Omakaitse.*[115] Its commander reported: "There is no homestead without an *Omakaitse* member, not to mention villages or towns. That is why every single partisan, parachutist or any other enemy is quickly spotted … and then liquidated. … Close cooperation with the German military headquarters, mutual trust and successful actions won *Omakaitse* an excellent reputation."[116] It was not the small German forces but the local police who kept the Red partisans out of the Baltic region. Latvian partisans reported that the police made up of *Aizsargi* members "is fighting against us with great tenacity. … It is extremely difficult to move across Latvia and to stay anywhere. … German garrisons are small. Partisans would be able to operate in Latvia more or less freely [only] after this military force [*Aizsargi*] is demoralized thoroughly from within."[117]

The contrast between the numbers of Balts who volunteered to join the Red partisans and the auxiliary police shows that until the final year of the German occupation, the politically active part of the Baltic rural population sided with the Germans against the Communists. The auxiliary police were former national guardsmen drawn from respected prosperous farmers who formed public opinion, whereas the poor peasants had little prestige and were apolitical. The Soviets had held the Baltic region for too short a time in 1940–1941 to break its rural hierarchy and acquire a solid basis of support. Agricultural laborers and poor peasants favored some aspects of Soviet policy but not enthusiastically enough to risk their lives whereas other farmers doggedly resisted the Soviets. This situation changed in early 1944 when the local self-administrations announced

[113] Documents No. 284 and 301 in Zolotarev, *Russkii arkhiv*, Vol. 9, pp. 480, 485, 501; V. P. Iampol'skii, "Vmesto bavarskogo piva pulia i golod," *VIZ* 1:15, 1997.

[114] E. Spure, secretary of the Latvian CC (1942), RSASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 445, ll. 22, 23; "Soobshcheniie sekretariu TsK KP(b) Latvii Kalnberzinu," RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 135, l. 119; Documents No. 110 and 261 in Zolotarev, *Russkii arkhiv*, Vol. 9, pp. 415, 480, 485.

[115] Maide, "*Svodka deiatel'nosti Omakaitse v 1941 g,*" p. 80; Major Chugunov, "Struktura i postroenie Omakaitse [Structure and organization of *Omakaitse*]" (25 November 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 452, l. 31; Argo Kuusik, "Estonian *Omakaitse* in 1941–1944," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 797. One of 12 members of the Estonian police *Omakaitse* received wages for service before 1943 and 1 of 37 in 1943; Document No. 28 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom*, p. 98.

[116] "Kratkii obzor ob obrazovanii i deiatel'nosti Omakaitse [Overview of the organization and the actions of *Omakaitse*]" (no date), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 452, l. 87.

[117] "Soobshcheniie sekretariu TsK KP(b) Latvii Kalnberzinu," l. 115.

mobilizations to the SS divisions, and the front moved close to the Baltic region. In Latgale, only 20 percent of the eligible conscripts reported.[118] Some Balts started believing that they had a better chance of surviving as partisans than as SS soldiers and joined the former. Only then did the partisan bands swell with fugitives. By the end of the war, half the Latvian partisans were SS and police deserters.[119] However, even then, the number of partisans in the Baltic region remained relatively small; by the time the Latvian Partisan Headquarters was dissolved in October 1944, it had only 2,279 armed fighters.[120]

The widespread collaboration with the Nazis in the Baltic did not necessarily mean that the Balts contributed more to the German war effort than to the Soviet one. In 1941–1942, the Soviets raised an Estonian and a Latvian rifle corps and a Lithuanian division from loyalists who had evacuated with the Red Army, those Balts who permanently lived in the Soviet Union and workers of the Baltic labor battalions. While Baltic police battalions raised by Germans with the help of self-administrations engaged mainly in counterinsurgency, the Soviet Baltic divisions were frontline formations from the start. Defections of Baltic soldiers from the Red Army were common in 1941–1942 but stopped later.[121] Most senior officers in these formations were from the disbanded national territorial rifle corps. The 201st Latvian Rifle Division, with volunteers making up 70 percent of its strength, went first in battle in December 1941 and earned a "Guards" title for its outstanding performance in the summer of 1942; the 308th Latvian Rifle Division was awarded a Red Banner Order for the fights in Riga in the fall of 1944. The 16th Soviet Lithuanian Rifle Division was praised for its actions in the battle of Kursk. By March 1945, 99,974 Lithuanians were drafted into the Red Army – almost three times as many as those who served in the German-sponsored police battalions. The 8th Estonian Rifle Corps, with 88.5 percent of Estonians among its personnel, engaged Germans first in December 1942 at Velikie Luki, where it lost half its soldiers owing to battle attrition and defections, but then it fought well against the Germans and Baltic *Waffen-SS* divisions in 1944 and took Tallinn in September of that year, for which its 249th Rifle Division received a Red Banner Order.[122] About 25,000

[118] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 138; Alfreds Raškevics, *Zapiski partizana* (Riga: Latviiskoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo), p. 295.

[119] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 139.

[120] Ibid., p. 140.

[121] Document No. 189 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, Vol. 3, p. 643.

[122] Antanas Sniečkus, first secretary of the Communist Party of Lithuania, "Otchetnyi doklad po deiatel'nosti TsK KP(b) Litvy [Report about the activities of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (16 September 1943), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 36, l. 27; Raškevics et al., *Na pravyi boi*, Vol. 1, pp. 441, 455, Vol. 2, p. 422; Document No. 13.7 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m,* Vol. 3 (Vilnius: Tarptautine Komisija, 2003), p. 263; Kaasik, "Formation of the Estonian Rifle Corps," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, p. 892; Peeter Kaasik, "The 8th Estonian Rifle Corps in Northwestern Russia in 1942–1944,"in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, pp. 911–926; Peeter Kaasik, "The 8th Estonian Rifle

Estonians, 5,000 Latvians, and 20,000 Lithuanians died in the ranks of the Red Army and labor battalions.[123]

Many more Ukrainians fought for the Soviets than against them. In 1941–1945, 3,184,726 Ukrainians enlisted in the Red Army, including 750,000 from the western regions. Twice as many West Ukrainians served in the Red Army as contributed to anti-Soviet resistance in 1944–1950.[124] In addition, tens of thousands of Ukrainians fought as partisans.[125] The number of Belorussians who collaborated with the Germans was negligible compared with those who fought for the Soviets.

While in the beginning of the German occupation most politically active people sided with the Germans, Nazi policies gradually changed the original perception of them as the lesser evil in most Slavic regions, and after the Soviets reentered the borderlands, the Soviet collaborators outnumbered those who were fighting for the Germans. The prestige and morale of the nationalists who faithfully served the Nazis, hoping for a change of heart, such as OUN-M and the Estonian, Latvian, and Belorussian nationalists, were ruined; most perceived the defeat of Germany as their own endgame and departed with the Germans. This is why Latvia, Estonia, and Belorussia, where nationalists bet on the Germans and failed to organize a political alternative to collaboration, contained a smaller proportion of bitter Soviet enemies than Ukraine and Lithuania, where nationalists distanced themselves from the Nazis and prepared an underground infrastructure for anti-Soviet resistance.

The actions of German and Soviet collaborators increased the polarization of the borderland communities. Those who had participated in the Holocaust saw no room for themselves in Soviet society; they prepared to fight to the bitter end, and they brought to resistance their extermination methods and the respective mentality. The participation of German collaborators in counterinsurgency outside their native regions also created severe ethnic tensions between groups that had earlier lived in peace, such as the Balts and the Slavs. The raids of Soviet partisans and the German overreaction to these raids forced people to take sides against their wish. The partisans reminded the borderland people that the Soviet regime was ever present and was winning the war. This prevented many opportunists from joining the Germans and the nationalists. As Kalyvas notes, "Irrespective of their sympathies (and everything else

Corps in the Conquest of Estonia in 1944," in Hiio et al., *Estonia*, pp. 1009, 1015; Zolotarev and Sevost'ianov, *Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina*, Vol. 3, pp. 164–169.

[123] Document No. 463 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 1, pp. 434–436; Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians,* pp. 157, 279; Taagepera, *Estonia,* p. 67; Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 356; Raškevics et al., *Na pravyi boi,* Vol. 1, p. 105.

[124] Mukovs'kyi, "Viis'kova mobilizatsiia v Ukraïni," p. 57; Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine,* p. 59; M. V. Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii i Velykii Vitchyznianii viinakh* (Kyïv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny, 1994), p. 50.

[125] Documents No. 283 and 284 in Zolotarev, *Russkii arkhiv,* Vol. 9, pp. 456, 483; Krawchenko, "Soviet Ukraine under Nazi Occupation," pp. 20, 31.

being equal), most people prefer to collaborate with the political actor that best guarantees their survival."[126] The partisans sheltered those hiding from German deportations and conscriptions; thus thousands of borderland residents indifferent to Communist ideology found themselves on the Soviet side. Soviet collaborators in the borderlands outnumbered German ones in the final year of the war; some had joined the Soviets voluntarily, and some had not. This polarization of the borderland community added bitterness to the subsequent Soviet counterinsurgency campaign.

3.4 The Nationalists during the German Occupation

In some borderland regions, the nationalists became important political actors in the last year of German rule. The relative strength of the nationalist movements varied by region and depended on the intensity of nationalist sentiments, the policies of the German administration, and the strategy chosen by nationalist leaders. This section examines the emergence of nationalist armed units and shows how the German occupation, the growing presence of partisans, and the turning tide of war shaped the strategy of the nationalists and their relations with the local populations. The goal is to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of the nationalist groups on the eve of the Soviet reconquest and to show how the actions or inactions of these nationalists affected their image and prestige among the borderland people.

3.4.1 Ukrainian nationalists

The first component of the nationalist resistance was launched by Taras Borovets, a stone quarry owner vaguely affiliated at first with the émigré government of the Ukrainian People's Republic and later even more vaguely with OUN-M. He offered to organize paramilitary units for the Germans in order to pursue Red Army stragglers and partisans in Volhynia, and he received authorization to do so in August 1941.[127] In November, when the Germans ordered him to disband his force, he instead turned it into guerrilla bands, which he initially called *Polis'ka Sich* (Bands of Polesie) and later *Ukrains'ka Povstans'ka Armiia* (UPA, Ukrainian Insurgent Army).[128] Borovets favored a pan-Ukrainian front and advanced a vague political program with social-democratic overtones[129] but did not develop a long-term strategy. With the intensification of German requisitions in mid-1942, his militia attempted to ban German tax collectors from the villages, leading to

[126] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 12.

[127] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 71.

[128] After OUN-B's guerrilla force usurped the name UPA from Borovets, he renamed it the Ukrainian People's Revolutionary Army in July 1943; Taras Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy* (Winnipeg, Canada: Volyn, 1981), p. 254. In order to avoid confusion, I refer to Borovets' units as *Sich.*

[129] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 73.

several clashes with German security forces. In September 1942, Borovets negotiated an armistice with the Red partisans and in November with the Germans, although he abstained from cooperation with either. In March 1943, his guerrillas sought to block Red partisans from attacking German railway traffic in order to avert German retaliation. This terminated the armistice with the Soviets; from this point on, *Sich* regarded the Red partisans as its primary enemy.[130]

OUN-B had no armed units until late 1942. Although OUN-B rejected collaboration with the Germans as a strategic principle after the German crackdown on its members in the early fall of 1941, it continued sporadic cooperation on the tactical level, hoping to reach a compromise with the German administration. In 1941–1942, OUN-B presumed that the Soviet Union would be destroyed, but Germany, too exhausted to control the conquered lands, would have to recognize an independent Ukraine in return for nationalist assistance.[131] The First OUN-B conference in October 1941 rejected armed resistance against the Germans, and in the spring of 1942, OUN leaders prohibited actions against Germany under threat of death. They maintained that "any action against the Germans would mean help to Stalin." OUN perpetuated this policy until August 1943.[132]

In response to the first intrusions of Red partisans into western Ukraine, OUN-B started to organize its own militia in late 1942.[133] The following spring, its forces, borrowing the name UPA from Borovets, began their operations. In February 1943, the Third OUN-B conference discussed the possibility of anti-German struggle, a major reason for which was the intention "to detach from Moscow's influence those Ukrainian people who seek from Moscow protection from German imperialist menace."[134] In August 1943, the Third OUN-B congress switched Germany and Russia in its strategic scenario. It predicted that Germany would be destroyed and Russia too exhausted to control Ukraine; then OUN would launch a revolution and win independence. By this time, some UPA commanders, angered by the Axis plunder of Ukrainians and the labor draft to Germany, had turned to guerrilla warfare. With anti-Nazi sentiment growing among Ukrainians, OUN-B had to endorse limited actions against the Germans; otherwise, it would have lost prestige and potential recruits to the Red partisans. For the first time, OUN-B adopted

[130] Pütz, commander of SS and Security Police, "Taras Bulba Borovets" (11 November 1942), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 123, ll. 2–6; Taras Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy,* pp. 219–233.

[131] Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii i Velykii Vitchyznianii viinakh*, p. 36.

[132] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 75; Interrogation of M. D. Stepaniak (20–30 August 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 136, l. 48; "Partyzanka i nashe stanovyshchte do nei [The partisan movement and our position towards it]" (October 1942), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 348, l. 27; Interrogation of I. N. Tkachuk (18 and 23 June 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 134, ll. 97, 98.

[133] Document No. 25 in V. Vasil'ev et al., eds., *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 91.

[134] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 77.

the "two-front strategy," a fight against both Soviets and Germans.[135] It lasted for five months. In December 1943, UPA leaders ordered their units to "avoid aggressive fights" and to oppose the Germans only in order to prevent food collection and labor draft of Ukrainians.[136] However, OUN could not stop commanders who continued to attack the security police as they had done half a year before the official endorsement. UPA scored 47 clashes with the Germans.[137] In the fall of 1943, UPA anti-Nazi resistance was stronger than any other resistance outside Soviet borders, with the exception of Yugoslavia.

Meanwhile, OUN-B eliminated its political rivals. Like any party with a totalitarian mentality, each OUN faction denounced the other. OUN-M condemned OUN-B's proclamation of Ukrainian independence in June 1941 as cheap populism that had irreparably damaged relations with Germany.[138] OUN-B's Second congress, in turn, stated:

> The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists liquidates all opportunistic parties and émigré groups, philistine groups of nationalist fellow-travellers like that of A. Mel'nyk, the supporters of the Hetmanate and the UNR [Ukrainian People's Republic], the Socialist Revolutionaries, Social Democrats, UNDO [Ukrainian National Democratic Organization], FNE [Front of National Unity], radicals, clericals and all the rest who split the effort of the Ukrainian people.[139]

This intolerance resulted in deadly clashes, with OUN-B assassinating leaders of OUN-M and OUN-M denouncing members of OUN-B to SD.[140]

By 1943, *Sich* was weakened by Red partisans who discovered a bunker with its archive containing over 1,700 documents, which allowed them to kill many top *Sich* commanders and ransack their food and weapon caches.[141] However, it was not the partisans but OUN-B that delivered *Sich* a mortal blow. *Sich* was merely a number of self-defense units loosely subordinated to Borovets. They had no clear ideology or strategy, nor did they have a political party behind them. OUN-B far exceeded *Sich* in organizational structure, logistics, discipline, and charisma. UPA began raiding eastern Volhynia, dominated by *Sich,* seeking to subordinate it – by force if necessary. Borovets maintained that OUN-B had adopted the "fascist idea of total dictatorship" and "dismissed … common human ethics and morality and acted like bandits." In his words, "New 'liberators' are coming: the Bandera men. They are coming with

[135] Document No. 9 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II*, pp. 186, 190, 191.

[136] A. V. Kentii and G. V. Papakin, "Stratehiia 'dvufrontovoï' borot'by." in Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii viini*, p. 167.

[137] M. V. Koval', "Vyzvolennia Ukraïny vid natsysts'kykh okupantiv," in *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii viini*, p. 22.

[138] OUN-M, "Ukraïntsi! [Ukrainians!]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 927, l. 11; OUN-M, "Obvynuvachuemo! [We accuse!]" (February 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 927, l. 138.

[139] "Programmnye postanovleniia [Program statement]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 17, d. 125, l. 14.

[140] Interrogation of M. D. Stepaniak (20–30 August 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 136, ll. 86, 87; Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* pp. 67, 68; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* pp. 87, 88.

[141] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 215.

a whip, noose and bullet." They "start the future Ukrainian state by slaughtering ethnic minorities," "executing Ukrainians taken prisoner from the Red Army," and "strangling the finest people with rope." He asked OUN: "What are you fighting for? For Ukraine or for OUN? For a Ukrainian state or for your dictatorship in this state? For the Ukrainian nation or only for your party?"[142] OUN-B militia retorted by surrounding the *Sich* units in early September 1943 and giving them the choice between annihilation and integration into UPA. Most *Sich* fighters chose the latter. Those who did not, according to Borovets, were summarily executed. Borovets and part of his staff broke out, but his wife was captured and strangled by the comrades-in-arms. Borovets never recovered from this defeat. In November 1943, the Germans apprehended him and sent him to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Since OUN-M was unpopular because of its unconditional collaboration with the Germans, OUN-B became the sole political center of the nationalist guerrilla movement in Ukraine.[143]

OUN-B viewed the fight against the Germans as a temporary policy endorsed under pressure from below. This fight contradicted its strategy, which presumed that Germany would be defeated anyway. In January 1944, UPA ordered its units to move underground so as to "save as much force as possible for our final and victorious battle against imperialistic Moscow."[144] OUN's central *provod* negotiated with SD from January to August 1944, explaining to them that "Ukrainians would have been satisfied with a protectorate as a state form."[145] They could not agree on political issues because OUN-B always subordinated cooperation with Germany to the struggle for a Ukrainian state. However, OUN-B endorsed tactical cooperation with Germany. UPA collected military intelligence and food for the Germans in exchange for weapons, built bridges for them, guided German stragglers across the front line, passed Soviet partisans and *Wehrmacht* defectors to SD, and informed the Germans about the anti-Nazi resistance.[146] In April 1944 alone, UPA betrayed to the Germans

[142] Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy*, pp. 50, 271; Document No. 18 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996), pp. 291, 293; Document No. 212 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 2, p. 459.

[143] Interrogation of A. A. Iarosh (23 January 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 133, l. 23; Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy*, pp. 256, 272; Document No. 55 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 2, p. 131.

[144] Document No. 29 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 2, p. 48.

[145] Voloshenko, head of NKVD of the Lvov Province to Grushetskii, "O sovmestnoi deiatel'nosti OUN-UPA s okhrannoi politsiei i SD [Cooperation of OUN and UPA with the security police and SD]" (7 October 1944), Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi istorichnyi arkhiv Ukraïny, Lviv [Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Lvov], hereafter is cited as TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 67, ll. 78–102; Koval', "*Vyzvolennia Ukraïny*," p. 21.

[146] Voloshenko to Grushetskii, "O sovmestnoi deiatel'nosti"; Commander of UPA-1 "Okhrim" to the Commander of German Units in Galicia (2 April 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 339, ll. 221–223; *Abwehr* Unit 104, "Doklad o peregovorakh mezhdu ofitserami UPA i oberleitenantom Pützer [Negotiations between the UPA officers and Senior Lieutenant Pützer]" (11 April 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 339, l. 219; Interrogation of I. G. Pan'kiv (28 October–2 November 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 135, l. 185; Document No. 60 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny*, p. 129.

a Jewish, an AK, and a Soviet partisan unit. UPA representatives compiled a draft of an agreement to pass deserters from *Galizien* to SD, but it is unclear whether it was ever enforced. The Germans were pleased with their partner and parachuted weapons to them behind the front line.[147] *Abwehr* Colonel Linhardt stated on 22 April 1944:

> The military intelligence delivered by UPA is quite abundant (10–15 reports daily). … Sometimes Ukrainian units fought in cooperation with the German *Wehrmacht* against the Red Army and Bolshevik bands. … UPA units suffered grave losses and have already rendered us incalculable services in some political matters. It is [also] important that Ukrainian bands have stopped fighting the Germans.[148]

According to Siegfried Muller, officer of *Abwehrstelle* 202 Section, in October 1944, his office and UPA concluded a formal agreement about trading of German weapons in exchange for sabotage in the Soviet rear and intelligence collection.[149]

The evidence of this cooperation is overwhelming. OUN never had a coherent anti-German strategy. Mikhail Koval', a Ukrainian scholar, believes that "the strategy of OUN and UPA was dominated, to be sure, absolutely dominated, by the fight along with the fascists against the Red Army and the Red partisans, and not by the struggle against the fascists."[150] John Armstrong states that in 1944, OUN and the Germans were "closer than during the abortive 'honeymoon' of 1941." He argues:

> From the strictly military viewpoint, the activities of the Ukrainian nationalist partisans [against Germany] were of slight significance. Even from the immediate political standpoint, it is questionable whether they achieved anything of importance, for by the time the Germans were inclined to make concessions, their authority was already on the verge of being overthrown by the Red army.[151]

Meanwhile, the nationalists fought the Red partisans without compromise. OUN's instructions stated: "The alien and hostile elements that came to our lands to instigate partisan war [against the Germans] should be destroyed. … Guerrilla actions are not appropriate at this time; they split our forces, waste our energy and provoke German repressions against Ukrainians, which is equally beneficial for Germans, Muscovites and Poles."[152] Even during several

[147] Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag*, p. 80; "Nabrosok o predvaritel'no provedennyx peregovorakh UPA i politsii bezopasnosti v Rave-Russkoi [Draft of the preliminary agreement between UPA and the security police in Rava-Russkaia]" (1 June 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 339, l. 235; Document No. 60 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), p. 156.

[148] "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 1:94, 1995.

[149] Document No. 2 in Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag*, pp. 114–116.

[150] Koval, "Vyzvolennia Ukraïny," p. 22.

[151] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 123.

[152] "Ukraïntsi v shutspolitsii [Ukrainians in the security police]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 342, l. 100.

months of the "two-front strategy," UPA fought Red partisans far more intensively than they did the Germans.

With the Red Army approaching the borderlands, UPA fighters began defecting to the Red partisans. On 8 November 1943, a whole UPA company switched sides, whereas no mass desertions from the Reds to UPA ever occurred. *Sluzhba bezpeky* (SB), the dreaded OUN security service, used draconian measures to stop the defections. During one month, from mid-September to mid-October 1943, it executed 110 persons, according to its incomplete data, among them 68 Ukrainians; in November, it shot 24 deserters during a single day in a single company.[153] These measures merely increased defections because even UPA loyalists worried that they may die in sweeping purges.

The concept of an independent Ukraine promoted by Ukrainian nationalists struck a chord with many West Ukrainian priests, but relations between OUN and the church were complicated. Although many OUN leaders, such as Bandera, Stets'ko, and others, came from families of clerics, OUN's ideology, as that of most other fascist parties, was atheist. In 1943, the Third OUN congress declared the separation of the nationalist movement and the church.[154] Most hierarchs of the Uniate and Autocephalous churches were cool toward OUN because of its atheism and because they did not believe that OUN was a viable political power. Furthermore, as Armstrong writes, although Sheptyts'kyi was "a vigorous supporter of the Ukrainian nationalist movements," he "tried to turn them away from an extreme nationalism incompatible with Christianity," which again produced friction between Uniate and OUN leaders.[155] Nonetheless, OUN still favored the Autocephalous and, in particular, the Uniate Church over the Autonomous one, viewing the latter as Moscow's puppet; OUN assassinated several high-ranking clerics whom it regarded as Soviet collaborators. In May 1943, it killed Aleksii (Gromadskii), Primate of the Autonomous Church of Ukraine, who was succeeded, ironically, by "the most outspokenly pro-Russian of Autonomous bishops," Panteleimon (Rudyk).[156] Aleksii was an accidental victim of the ambush that targeted a German official but in August 1943 UPA abducted and hanged Manuil (Tarnavskii), Bishop of Vladimir-Volynskii, who had defected from the Autocephalous to the Autonomous Church and had issued several appeals calling on believers to abstain from helping UPA.[157] Many more parish Orthodox priests suffered the same fate.

[153] Documents No. 149, 171, and 212 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 2, pp. 312, 346, 457.

[154] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 156; Interrogation of A. A. Gumeniuk, an Orthodox priest of Northern group of UPA – "Orlik" group (18 February1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 133, ll. 36, 37; O. E. Lysenko, "Do pitannia pro stanovishche tserkvi v Ukraini u period druhoi svitovoi viiny," *UIZh* 3:80, 1995.

[155] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 151.

[156] Dallin, *German Rule in Russia,* p. 485; Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 157.

[157] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 158.

UPA adopted OUN's antisemitism. Its internal instruction stated: "Ukrainian nationalists exterminate the Jews, [but] an exception should be made for specialists who would agree to serve in UPA in order to save their lives."[158] However, later SB issued an order: "All non-professional [*nespetsialisty*] Jews [serving in UPA] should be secretly eliminated so that neither [other] Jews nor our people would know. The rumour should be spread that they went to the Bolsheviks."[159] OUN's publications consistently referred to "Jewish-Bolshevik scum," and in 1944, Dontsov, the major ideologist of "integral nationalism," claimed "struggle against Jewry is in the interest and in the traditions of the Ukrainian nation." In some regions, UPA units received orders to kill all the Jews they found; to economize ammunition, they quartered Jews with axes, smashed their heads with iron bars, or burned them alive. They also routinely killed entire families in households that hid Jews.[160]

OUN caused far fewer Jewish deaths than the Ukrainian auxiliary police – several thousand between 1941 and 1944. It contributed to the history of genocide mainly with the ethnic cleansing of Poles. Ukrainian nationalists, probably *Sich* units uncontrolled by Borovets, began it in Rovno Province in February 1943, but OUN enthusiastically embraced this initiative, engaged in a far more systematic slaughter, and spread it to other West Ukrainian regions. Mykola Lebed', OUN's top leader, proposed "to cleanse Poles from the entire revolutionary territory."[161] OUN distributed a brief printed announcement stating that "all Poles living in the village … should leave the Ukrainian land within 10 days. All who disobey this order will be killed and their property will be destroyed."[162] P. Oliinyk, a Uniate priest, recounted: "If the threats of the [UPA] partisans failed to impress the Polish rural population, the partisans attacked Polish homes … and killed everyone, from the youngest to the oldest."[163]

UPA reports confirm that it exterminated Poles as thoroughly as the *Einsatzgruppen* did Jews.[164] Both UPA commanders-in-chief – Dmytro Kliachkivs'kyi and his successor, Roman Shukhevych – were determined to

[158] Interrogation of I. N. Tkachuk (18 and 23 June 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 134, l. 108.

[159] Document No. 44 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 4, p. 126.

[160] "Druzhe Kornii [Comrade Kornii]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 928, l. 190; Document No. 39 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny*, p. 392; UPA, "Boitsy i ofitsery Chervonoï Armiï! [Soldiers and officers of the Red Army!]" (January 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 70, d. 997, l. 17; Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 118; Snyder, "The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing 1943," pp. 222–223; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, p. 263; Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag*, pp. 72–79, 82, 84.

[161] Snyder, "The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing 1943," p. 202; Vasyl' Begma and Luka Kizia, *Shliakhy neskorenykh* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1965), p. 314. Most scholars believe that OUN initiated the cleansing of Poles in Volhynia in the spring of 1943. However, Red partisans operating in Rovno Province reported an earlier mass slaughter of Poles in February; Document No. 2 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 4, p. 61.

[162] UPA (10 August 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 927, l. 11.

[163] P. P. Oliinyk, "Zoshyty," *UIZh* 9:98, 1993.

[164] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, pp. 156–160.

kill or expel all Poles in Ukraine. As Kliachkivs'kyi maintained, "We should carry out a large-scale liquidation action against Polish elements. During the evacuation of the German Army, we should find an appropriate moment to liquidate the entire male population between 16 and 60 years. … Villages in the forests and villages adjacent to forests should be razed to the ground."[165] Iurii Stel'mashchuk, commander of the UPA *Zavykhost* region, admitted:

> In June 1943, "Klim Savur" (Dmytro Kliachkivs'kyi), the commander of the so-called UPA Group North, passed to me an oral order of the OUN central *provod* about the total physical extermination of the Polish population in all western provinces of Ukraine. Fulfilling this order of the OUN leaders, a formation consisting of several UPA bands slaughtered more than 15,000 Poles in August 1943.[166]

UPA's atrocities against Poles horrified the Soviets. The Rovno headquarters of the Red partisans, no friends of Poles, reported:

> Nationalists conduct mass terror against the Polish population and the [Polish] villages. … Nationalists do not shoot Poles but stab them with knives and axe them regardless of their age or sex. In the village Triputni, nationalists axed 14 Polish families. … In the [Polish] Berezno and Chaikovo villages … nationalists slaughtered the entire population and burned down over 2,000 houses.[167]

Sometimes during these actions UPA fighters disguised themselves as Red partisans to provoke hostility between partisans and Poles.[168] Ivan Vasiuk, a 19-year-old UPA guerrilla captured by the Soviets, confessed that his company exterminated 1,500 Poles in three Polish villages in November 1943. He personally killed 19 persons, including 8 men, 6 women, and 5 children.[169] In the Lvov Archdiocese alone, UPA killed 48 Polish priests, many more than the Soviets did in 1939–1941.[170] Waclaw Szeletnicki, a Polish priest, described UPA's massacre of Poles in Plebanowka Village: "This was a hideous sight of human forms chopped with axes and gored with knives, some bodies with legs chopped off and hands cut off." Many Poles were burned alive in locked houses.[171] The monthly report of the OUN leader responsible for the Peremyshl' District, Ternopol Province, states:

> 1.04.44: In Bile village, 19 Poles were killed and 11 houses burned down.
> 2.04.44: Nine Poles and two Jewesses who worked for the Poles were killed.

[165] Ibid., pp. 165, 173.
[166] Zarechnyi, "Al'ians: OUN – SS," p. 57. Kliachkivs'kyi yielded the position of commander-in-chief to Roman Shukhevych in November 1943.
[167] "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 4:97, 1994. See an OUN-B order on axing Poles in Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia,* p. 230.
[168] Documents No. 1 and 4 in Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag*, pp. 126, 131.
[169] Interrogation of I. N. Vasiuk (9 January 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 70, d. 237, ll. 2, 3.
[170] Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth,* pp. 325–327.
[171] Ibid., pp. 189, 181–191, 203, 264–267, 292, 326. See also Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia*, pp. 104, 105; Naumov, *Zapadnyi reid*, pp. 122, 124; Documents No.13, 17, 36, 37,

5.04.44: In Pniatyn village, 5 Poles were killed.
14.04.44: In Zhydovychi village, 38 Poles were killed, including 4 women who offered resistance, and 14 houses burned down.
15.04.44: In Tuchne village, 66 Poles were killed, 23 houses were burned down.
29.04.44: In Dobrianychi village, 5 Poles and one Ukrainian informer were killed.
29.04.44: In Utihovychi village, 9 Poles were killed.
30.04.44: In Tuchne village, 4 Poles were killed.
29.04.44: In Prybyn village, a Polish chauvinist woman was killed and 11 houses were burned down.
30.04.44: In Glibovychi village, 42 Poles were killed, [and also] in the villages Mys'ova: 22; Mistechko: 36; Zarubyna: 27; Bechas: 18; Nedilys'ka: 19; Grabnik:19; Galyna: 80, Zhabokruk: 40 Poles.[172]

Some Uniate parish priests inspired ethnic cleansing, but most abhorred it. Sheptyts'kyi, himself a Polish aristocrat in the past, called actions of this type "horrible murders committed by young people, maybe in good faith, but with devastating results for the nation."[173] Soviet partisans issued a special message, "To the West Ukrainian Clergy," in which they wrote: "Priests must understand their mission and define their position in the current situation. If they warn the Galician people and youth in their regions against fighting their brothers from the Left Bank and … killing innocent women and children of other ethnic backgrounds, then these priests would perform a great service to their people."[174]

Polish nationalists and the Polish police raised by the Germans when the Ukrainian police defected to OUN also attacked Ukrainian villages. On 2 June 1944, 10 AK companies attempted to destroy all Ukrainian villages in Chrubieszów Region but were repelled by UPA. Later, an AK unit led by Lieutenant Cybulski destroyed the Ukrainian village of Werzchowina, Chelm Province, along with its entire population of 202 persons.[175] However, unlike OUN, AK never planned genocide. Because of this, far fewer Ukrainians than Poles fell victim to this ethnic conflict.

41, 44, and 45 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* pp. 52, 68, 87, 89, 396, 403, 404; Document No. 60 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit*, p. 161.

[172] "Protokol v spravi vidplatnykh aktsii na poliakakh v pov. Peremyshliany [Retaliation actions against Poles in the Peremyshl' District]" (12 May 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 339, l. 422.

[173] "Ispol'zovanie dukhovenstva i vliianie na naselenie cherez tserkovnuiu obshchinu [The use of the clergy and influence on the population through the parishes]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 562, 563; Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth*, p. 328.

[174] Document No. 244 in Malanchuk et al., *Pravda pro Uniiu*, pp. 362, 363.

[175] Interrogation of V. V. Levochko (25 December 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 135, l. 303; A. F. Noskova and T. V. Volokitina, eds., *NKVD i pol'skoe podpol'e, 1944–1945* (Moscow: Institut slavianovedeniia i balkanistiki RAN, 1994), p. 197.

Polish sources estimate that Ukrainian nationalists killed about 50,000 Poles in Volhynia and between 20,000 and 30,000 in Galicia.[176] A UPA unit led by "Kruk" boasted: "After the purge of Poles, it is hard to meet any Pole in our territory."[177] SB, however, wrote a more sobering report on the outcome of the ethnic cleansing: "The action aiming at the extermination of Poles brought no desired results" because "Polish active elements mostly escaped and exploit the German and Bolshevik occupation of western Ukraine to exact revenge on Ukrainians." In addition, "We failed to attract any sizable ethnic minority group"; in fact, "all victims of political repressions conducted by Germans or Ukrainians, like Poles, Jews, Cossacks, Gypsies, etc., escaped to the Red partisans." In Sarny Region, Poles constituted 40 percent of the Red partisan units after the UPA action.[178] Borovets believed that "almost all Poles joined the Bolsheviks against the Ukrainians"[179] because they regarded the Soviets as their only possible protector. Poles suffered disproportionately from Soviet repressions in 1939–1941, yet UPA's ethnic cleansing was far more brutal, which made Poles in Ukraine more pro-Soviet than those elsewhere, despite their anti-Communist and anti-Russian sentiments. OUN observed:

> The Poles started to serve the Bolsheviks immediately, … brought them tobacco and vodka and complained that Ukrainians were slaughtering them. … Many Poles joined the Red Army voluntarily; those who remain [in the region] are NKVD informants. … The Bolsheviks are well aware that the Poles are not fond of Soviet authority but use them because the Poles are familiar with the local conditions and can provide some information about our movement.[180]

When it became clear that Germany was losing the war, OUN-B made several futile attempts to find sponsors among the Western Allies. This forced the Third congress of OUN-B that gathered in August 1943 to drop the racist clauses of its program and promise "the full right of national minorities to cultivate their own national cultures" and "equality of all citizens of Ukraine, whatever their nationality."[181] However, exactly when the congress was guaranteeing equality to ethnic minorities, UPA was completing the extermination of Poles in Volhynia and beginning it in Galicia. UPA continued the ethnic cleansing until 1945.[182] If the casualties inflicted by a resistance indicate its objectives, then UPA's major focus was not the fight against the Soviets, even less against the Germans, but the ethnic cleansing of Poles.

[176] Snyder, "The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing 1943," p. 202; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 176.
[177] Document No. 168 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 2, p. 340.
[178] Document No. 149 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 2, pp. 308–310.
[179] Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy,* pp. 246, 249.
[180] 'Klim', "Informatyvnyi zvit z bil'shovits'koi diinosti [Report of the Bolsheviks' actions]" (30 August 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 926, ll. 50–52.
[181] Document No. 9 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II,* p. 188.
[182] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 175.

By the summer of 1943, each anti-Soviet resistance movement was placing its hopes for the restoration of independence on the anticipated conflict between the USSR and the Western Allies. OUN-B presumed that after the front rolled over Ukraine to Europe, UPA would attack the Soviet administration to prevent its establishment in rural areas until the Soviet advance in Europe provoked a conflict with the Western Allies. OUN believed that victory of the Allies over the Axis "would bring only a momentary pause in the war and would soon lead to new collisions between imperialist powers over the division of war spoils. … The domination of Europe by the Bolsheviks is not in the interest of the [Western] Allies and they are attempting in the present war to weaken, and eventually destroy, Russian imperialism."[183] In addition,

> Britain and America will have to take into account the presence of strong internal anti-Soviet forces. Moreover, this factor itself will accelerate the conflict between the USSR and its current allies because [the governments of] Britain and America would be able to justify the change of their policy towards Russia to their nations, stating that the peoples of the USSR live under oppression.[184]

Britain and the United States had pledged in the Atlantic Charter that "they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."[185] Therefore, the West would support nationalists struggling for an independent Ukrainian state and opposed to the spread of Communism. Then the nationalists would "turn the new imperialist war into nationalist and social revolutions of the oppressed nations," an idea apparently borrowed from Lenin's article, "The War and Russian Social Democracy."[186] The experience of 1918, when Ukrainian nationalists had exploited wartime chaos to proclaim the Ukrainian People's Republic, also shaped these ideas. OUN spread wild rumors about an imminent new war. Allegedly, an army of 80,000 Canadian Ukrainians were to invade the Soviet Union in 1944, 200,000 American Ukrainians were marching to Ukraine from Italy, and the United States was pressing the Soviet Union to surrender to Japan.[187] OUN had to hold on for just a short time until the USSR disintegrated.

[183] Document No. 9 in Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II,* pp. 189, 190.

[184] Interrogation of M. D. Stepaniak (20–30 August 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 136, l. 56.

[185] "The Atlantic Charter" (14 August 1941), in Bronis J. Kaslas, ed., *The USSR–German Aggression against Lithuania* (New York: Robert Speller & Sons, 1973), p. 475.

[186] "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 4:90, 1994; Vladimir Lenin, "The War and Russian Social-Democracy," in *Selected Works,* Vol. 1 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), p. 624.

[187] Lieutenant-Colonel Matveev, "Spravka o sviaziax OUN s anglichanami [Information about the contacts of OUN with the British]" (5 December 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 117, l. 47v; Gapii, secretary of the Rovno Provincial Party Committee, "Informatsiia o politnastroeniiakh naseleniia v Rovenskoi oblasti [Information about the sentiments of the population in the Rovno Province]" (18 June 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1742, l. 66; Document No. 59 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 123.

3.4.2 Baltic nationalists

While West Belorussians never trusted the Germans, and West Ukrainians became disappointed with them within several months after their arrival, monthly reports of the Estonian police on people's morale show that most Estonians remained pro-German until the battle of Stalingrad. However, beginning in late 1942, public sentiments drifted only in one direction: an increasing resentment toward Germany, particularly spiraling after the reduction of food rations, the conscriptions of men in police battalions, as well as the labor draft; contempt for the self-administration attempting to enforce these conscriptions; a growing influence of the Soviet radio propaganda versus the German one; an understanding that Germany was losing the war and that active collaboration with it was therefore unwise; a hope for the political assistance of the Western Allies who would limit Soviet vindictiveness, and an increasing sympathy with the Soviets among the Russian minority.[188]

By 1944, Lithuanian nationalists began organizing underground cells. The major component of the Baltic underground was the *Lietuvos Laisves Armija* (LLA, Lithuanian Liberation Army), an organization of former officers that emerged in December 1941 but later became an extensive cross-class and a supraparty rural military organization. However, the anti-German activities of Baltic underground did not go beyond printing leaflets that called for the sabotage of German mobilizations and food deliveries. All major nationalist groups in the Baltic region except AK collaborated with the Germans more than they resisted them. In November 1943, former leaders of major Lithuanian parties and several nationalist leagues organized an underground Lithuanian government, *Vyriausias Lietuvos Išlaisvinimo Komitetas* (VLIK, the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania), dominated by members of the urban middle class who switched their political orientation from the Axis to the Western Allies.[189] VLIK never called for armed resistance to Germany but emphasized the imminent fight against Communism. Underground committees with similar agendas, the Latvian Central Council and the Estonian Republic National Committee, emerged in August 1943 and March 1944. The latter called Estonians to join the *Wehrmacht* as the Red Army approached.[190]

The strategy of the Lithuanian nationalists resembled that of OUN-B. Both viewed independence as their final goal but initially collaborated with the Germans. When the Germans dashed their hopes for the restoration of statehood, most stopped collaborating but continued to cooperate against Soviet partisans. Lithuanian and Ukrainian nationalists prepared an underground infrastructure for armed struggle against the Soviets. However, the difference between UPA's fights against the Nazis and the symbolic resistance in Lithuania was striking: When OUN-B reluctantly endorsed actions against the Germans,

[188] Argo Kuusik, "Public Sentiments during the Period of German Occupation," in Hiio et al., *Estonia,* pp. 620–632.

[189] Budreckis, "Lithuanian Resistance," pp. 345, 346.

[190] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 67; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 486.

Ukrainian guerrillas killed hundreds of Axis soldiers and controlled much of the countryside. Whereas UPA became a major problem for the German administration in Ukraine in 1943, few Balts worked with the underground committees or LLA, and few knew about them. No armed nationalist resistance was recorded in the Baltic region, except for spontaneous mutinies in collaborator military units, and the Germans almost ignored the nationalist underground.

Like OUN, the Baltic nationalists also hoped for the intervention of the West. Janis Zelčans, founder of the Latvian Partisan Union for the Defence of the Motherland, assured prospective recruits: "In no time … England will go to war with the Soviet Union and Latvia will be freed from the Bolsheviks"; another underground Latvian cell claimed that because of its war debts, the Soviet government would be forced to surrender the Baltic states to the Western Allies, and an Estonian resistance group expected an imminent joint invasion of Britain, the United States, Sweden, and Turkey.[191] LLA's strategic plan stated: "(a) in case of war against the Anglo-Saxons and other West European states, the Soviets will leave the occupied [Baltic] states after the first blows. (b) Lithuanians will enter a decisive battle with the weakened Bolshevism at this moment" and "provide all possible assistance to the invader pursuing the Red Army." However, "the fate of Lithuania must be decided not by the large neighboring states" but by its own struggle.[192] Lacking professional politicians, the LLA had only an embryonic political program that did not specify a desired system in Lithuania. It simply pursued national independence through armed resistance.

3.4.3 Polish nationalists

Most Poles acknowledged the legitimacy of their government-in-exile. Except for its extreme right component, the Polish resistance never collaborated with the Germans. It regarded the Nazis as the mortal enemy of the Polish nation. Its position toward the Soviets evolved depending on the situation at the fronts, the policies of the major members of the Grand Alliance, and particular incidents such as the tensions over Wladyslaw Anders' Army,[193] the revelation of the Katyn massacre, the creation of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, and contacts between the pro-Communist forces and the nationalist guerrillas. Poland and Russia restored relations after Germany attacked the USSR, and they concluded a military alliance on 30 July 1941 that presumed an amnesty of all Polish citizens kept in Soviet jails, labor camps, and exile. However, the

[191] Geoffrey Swain, "Divided We Fall: Division within the National Partisans of Vidzeme and Latgale, Fall 1945," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 38(2):199, 2007; Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 174.

[192] L. Beria to Stalin (24 April 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 95, ll. 291–297; "LLA Program" (no date), RVGA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, ll. 15, 16.

[193] Wladyslaw Anders, a Polish general, commanded an army raised from Polish POWs in the Soviet Union in late 1941. The army was equipped by the Soviets but refused to fight on the Eastern Front and evacuated to Iran in September 1942, during the battle of Stalingrad.

two governments broke relations again after the discoveries in the Katyn Forest in April 1943. The major cause of tensions between the Soviet Union and the government-in-exile was not even the fate of the Poles murdered by the NKVD but the status of the disputed territories. The two sides never abrogated the alliance, whose conditions stated: "The government of the USSR regards as invalid [the provisions of] the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 on the territorial changes in Poland."[194] Accordingly, the government-in-exile demanded the return of the disputed territories, being unaware of the agreement reached by the Allies at the Tehran Conference that ceded them to the Soviet Union. Most members of the government-in-exile were ready to cooperate with the Soviets on certain conditions. The Poles in London believed that a mass anti-Nazi uprising in Poland would secure such international prestige that the Western Allies would force the Soviets to drop their demands.

The largest component of the Polish resistance, AK, viewed itself as a supra-party armed force loyal to the government-in-exile and aimed to unite and control the Polish resistance. It started as a network of urban anti-Nazi cells consisting mainly of former army officers, but it gradually turned into a cross-class underground organization with support from all social groups. Before its mobilization in June 1944, AK had only 6,000 armed guerrillas. The rest of its 370,000 members conducted sabotage actions in cities and collected weapons and intelligence. After the mobilization, the number of AK guerrillas rose to 60,000. AK's ally, *Bataliony Chlopskie* (Peasant Battalions), a military wing of the moderate Peasant Party, had 30,000 guerrillas by 1944, most of which eventually merged with AK.[195] The Communists and the extreme right wing of the National Party opposed the government-in-exile but conditionally cooperated with it. They organized their own resistance groups, which were less popular than AK.

AK developed its military strategy by 1944. At its heart was Operation Tempest: Polish guerrillas were to rise in disputed areas against German rear-guards demoralized by the approach of the Red Army and seize power in major cities just before of the arrival of the Soviets. The timing of the insurrection was crucial. Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, the AK commander-in-chief, maintained that the uprisings should occur ideally about 12 hours before the Red Army entered major cities so that the insurgents would have time to take power during the chaotic retreat of the Germans. If AK rises too early, he argued, the Germans would crush the insurrection – poorly armed guerrillas could not resist Germans for more than several days. A wave of urban insurrections would roll in front of the Soviet advance from east to west across

[194] Document No. 457 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 2, Book 1, p. 420.

[195] V. S. Parsadanova, "Dvizhenie soprotivleniia nakanune osvobozhdeniia Pol'shi," in V. V. Mar'ina, ed., *Dvizhenie soprotivleniia v stranakh Tsentral'noi i Iugo-Vostochnoi Evropy* (Moscow: RADIKS, 1995), pp. 375, 383, 398; Noskova and Volokitina, *NKVD i pol'skoe podpol'e,* p. 13.

Poland, producing Polish administrations loyal to the government-in-exile and setting the Soviets in front of fait accompli. These uprisings were directed militarily against the Germans but politically against the Soviets. AK was to maintain neutrality with the Soviets but oppose their attempts to incorporate Poles into the Red Army or into the 1st Polish Army raised by the Soviets from Poles.[196] This was an extremely risky strategy. The success crucially depended on two factors: AK's ability to overwhelm the retreating Germans and the prompt arrival of the Red Army after the beginning of the uprisings.

Bor-Komorowski observed bitterly in November 1943 that merely six months after the Katyn scandal "among the masses a tendency to regard the Soviets as [their] rescuers from the German terror has begun to emerge."[197] He had to prohibit any actions against Red partisans and the Red Army.[198] The Soviet General Staff, in turn, instructed the Red partisans to maintain benevolent neutrality toward AK and, as in case of other nationalist resistance groups, urge the Polish underground to postpone the discussion of political problems until the victory over Germany. The Soviets planned to use Polish guerrilla manpower against Germans without promising AK any political concessions. This attempt was futile. The political goals of the Soviets and the AK, and their means to attain them, were incompatible. The Soviets sought to defeat Germany, regardless of the price, as quickly as possible by all means. AK planned to achieve its goals with a minimum of civilian casualties and rejected the permanent guerrilla warfare practiced by the Soviets, preferring dramatic but short actions aimed primarily at securing international prestige and gaining leverage against the Soviet Union. AK called on Poles to abstain from armed struggle against Germany until a spectacular uprising would bring the most political benefits. Relations between AK and the pro-Communist guerrillas turned on local circumstances and the personalities of field commanders. They more often collaborated than clashed. Their cooperation was particularly fruitful in actions against UPA.[199]

Conclusion

How did the borderland peasants view the prospects of Soviet reoccupation? When assessing the authorities, they compared their own experiences under different regimes. The German invasion brought relief to some residents of the borderlands but worsened the living standards of those who had benefited from Soviet reforms. The narrow-minded policies of the *Herrenvolk,* with indiscriminate terror as the major means to enforce these policies, often shifted the perception of the lesser evil from the Germans to the Soviets, especially

[196] Jan Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Uprising* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 143, 183, 205, 268–271.

[197] Ibid., p. 202.

[198] Ibid., p. 168.

[199] Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA UPA v roky viiny,* p. 75; V. I. Klokov, *Kovel'skii uzel* (Kiev: Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1981), p. 192.

in Slavic regions that had not been directly threatened by collectivization but had experienced in full Nazi heavy-handedness. Most farmers were happy to see the Germans go, but few met the Red Army with enthusiasm. The peasant attitude toward the Soviet regime varied across the borderlands and depended on the prosperity of the population, its political traditions, its cultural proximity to the Soviet people, the Soviet policy in these regions in 1939–1941, the variations of German policy in 1941–1944, and the actions of nationalists during the German occupation.

The patterns of loyalties and hatreds varied in every region, as the example of Ukraine shows. Galicia had never been a part of the Russian empire; most of its population belonged to the Uniate Church, and its historical and cultural ties to Soviet Ukraine were the weakest. German treated Galicians better than other Ukrainians because Galicia was a part of *Generalgouvernment Poland,* where the policy generally was milder than in the *Reichskommissariat Ukraine.* Galicia was one of the most peaceful provinces under German occupation and offered the most resistance to the Red partisans. When Germans and OUN-M called volunteers for the *Galizien* Division, the quota was overfilled more than three times.[200] The farmers of Volhynia and Polesie were culturally closer to eastern Ukraine, having lived in Imperial Russia and belonging to the Orthodox Church. These regions were leftist in the 1930s; they were no more prosperous than eastern Ukraine had been before the collectivization[201] and were less hurt by Soviet policies during the first occupation than were the Galicians. Subsequently, they were less hostile to the Soviets. The partisans actually reestablished Soviet authority in large regions of Volhynia and Polesie long before the Soviet reoccupation. They could do so only because they had the necessary popular support or compliance. Militant nationalism was alien to the Orthodox Ukrainians of northern Bukovina, which had belonged to Romania in 1919–1940. The Soviets made no attempt to launch collectivization there before the German onslaught, and the anti-Soviet sentiments were strong enough to cause only a moderate resistance. The nationalists had no support in Transcarpathian Ukraine, part of Czechoslovakia before 1939. The people who lived there perceived themselves not even as Ukrainians but as Rusyns, a different ethnic group,[202] and many were leftist. The large Polish community in western Ukraine was anti-Russian and anti-Communist, yet it hated the Ukrainian nationalists more than anyone else. After UPA drove AK from the countryside, the Polish villagers resolutely sided with the partisans, as did the Jews who survived the Holocaust. OUN had an access to eastern Ukraine only during the German occupation. In 1942, it had only a few hundred members there, with just 30 in Kiev.[203] An OUN functionary

[200] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 131.
[201] Ibid., p. 12.
[202] Priests of Orthodox Mukachevo-Priashevo Diocese to Stalin (18 November 1944), GARF, f. 6991, op. 2, d. 9, l. 81.
[203] Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism,* p. 162.

visiting these regions came to the conclusion that peasants were unconcerned with independence, whereas urban workers were ethnically mixed and perceived themselves as Soviet rather than Ukrainian. Only a small part of East Ukrainians, mainly the intelligentsia, responded to nationalist propaganda, but this group was not keen enough to participate in armed struggle. Most thought of Ukraine and Russia as parts of one state and believed that the Slavic people should be united against Germany. The youth was mostly pro-Soviet.[204]

Most West Belorussians believed that the Soviets would bring change for the better, although even they met the restoration of Soviet authority with resignation, not enthusiasm. Returning Soviet officials reported that "in Gomel, Polesie and Minsk provinces [pre-1939 Belorussia], people met the Red Army with joy, flowers, bread and salt. … The Red Army saw nothing like that in western Belorussia. People are reserved, cautious and not overtly hospitable or friendly."[205] Yet West Belorussians still were friendlier than other borderland ethnic groups. It was mainly the Poles who opposed the Soviets in Belorussia. Unlike their compatriots in Ukraine, the Poles who lived in Belorussia and Lithuania had no bloody encounters with the ethnic majority; AK had survived and was preparing to resist the Soviets.

The Balts developed their nationhood in the interwar period, and their culture had little in common with the Soviets. The Balts were wealthier than the Slavs; they benefited less from the Soviet reforms of 1939–1941, whereas the German occupation was less oppressive in the Baltic region. Although poor peasants and agricultural laborers had disliked their status during the interwar period, most Balts favored the return to the conditions of prewar life in independent states.

In the absence of viable alternatives, the Baltic and Ukrainian nationalists pinned all their hopes on the conflict between the Soviet Union and its Western Allies. Meanwhile, they believed that armed resistance to the Soviet authorities would maintain the morale of the people, stir their nationalism, and lend legitimacy to the independence claim. How did the perspectives of such resistance look in 1944? Some factors suggested that it could be sustainable. East Europeans had become accustomed to violence during the war; many were armed and had adopted the culture of resistance as the way of survival, and purely criminal banditry became widespread, contributing to the destabilization of eastern European societies. Nationalism received a strong impetus during World War II, and the desire for independence was strong in all regions but western Belorussia. In western Ukraine and Lithuania, charismatic nationalist leaders established a guerrilla infrastructure and enlisted thousands of resolute men and women prepared to fight the Soviets to the bitter end. Furthermore, guerrillas hoped to enlist thousands of draft evaders who were hiding in the forests from German and Soviet conscriptions.

[204] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 44.
[205] Bulganin to Stalin (15 July 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 66, l. 17.

However, most of those hating the Communists doubted that the struggle against the Soviets could succeed. In western Ukraine and Lithuania, nationalists could persuade many that the resistance was viable. In Latvia and Estonia, where nationalism was as strong as in western Ukraine and Lithuania, people were better educated, less influenced by an authoritarian political culture, and more realistic. They were more skeptical about the outcome of fight against a ruthless regime that had proved its might by defeating Germany, and they doubted a war would occur among the Allies. As a soldier of the Latvian SS put it, "Friends say come to the forest, the British and Americans are coming; but I say … if the German Army could not stand up to the Red Army, you with your rifles in the forests never will."[206] Paradoxically, the greater collaboration with Germany by Latvian and Estonian opponents of the Soviet regime weakened postwar resistance in these regions in comparison with resistance in Lithuania and western Ukraine, where nationalists had pursued independent agendas. Most politically active Latvians and Estonians who hated the Soviets enlisted in collaborator military units that evacuated with the Germans, whereas most Lithuanian and West Ukrainian anti-Communists evaded German drafts and remained in their native regions. The prestige of Latvian and Estonian collaborators who chose to stay in their countries was ruined, and the resistance often viewed them as a liability. When nationalist leaders called for armed struggle against the Soviet invaders, more Lithuanians and western Ukrainians than Latvians or Estonians responded.

[206] Swain, "Divided We Fall," p. 195.

4

Nationalist Resistance after the Soviet Reconquest

> Freedom to peoples, freedom to the individual!
> – Slogan of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army

When the Soviets returned to the borderlands in 1944, they encountered guerrilla war in every western region except Moldova. However, they quickly acquired thousands of supporters among those who, during the first Soviet occupation, had begun to wonder whether their position at the rural bottom was natural or fair, and also those driven to the Soviet side by German repressions and the ethnic cleansing conducted by nationalists and German collaborators. This chapter examines the social basis, strategy, and methods of the anti-Soviet resistance groups, their policies toward other nationalists and Germany, and relations between guerrillas and civilians. Though strong at the beginning of the Soviet reoccupation, the resistance was undermined gradually by Soviet pacification, disbelief in victory, strategic mistakes, and terror unleashed against peasants who complied with government regulations.

4.1 The Social Basis of the Resistance

Who fought the Communists in the western borderlands? In 1939–1941, dissent centered on the cities, and opposition consisted mainly of intellectuals, professionals, former officers, and university students. The police quickly destroyed most urban underground cells and eliminated the potential urban troublemakers by preemptive deportations. During the Soviet reoccupation of 1944, the epicenter of opposition shifted to the countryside, although its leaders still came predominantly from the urban middle and lower middle classes. In the Baltic and Polish resistance movements, former officers took the top positions. In Lithuania, for instance, 37 percent of known guerrilla commanders were former military officers, and another 10 percent were former police officers. Most Ukrainian nationalist leaders were professional revolutionaries

from families of officers, teachers, craftsmen, and priests.[1] When the Red Army approached the borderlands in the spring of 1944, the forests were full of people who had demonstrated their hostility toward the Soviet regime and who believed that this left them no option but to fight. They were the core of the resistance. The guerrilla units consisted of ideological enemies of communism, such as nationalists; Nazi collaborators fearing Soviet reprisals, including national guards, deserters from SS units, auxiliary police, and civilians involved in the extermination of Jews, Communists, and Soviet prisoners of war (POWs); those attacked by the Communists as "class enemies"; and most of all, farmers hurt by the Soviet agrarian policy. The resistance groups in the Baltic region as well as the AK consisted mainly of volunteers, whereas the *Ukrains'ka Povstans'ka Armiia* (UPA, Ukrainian Insurgent Army) included a large number of conscripts.

Fascists were stronger in Lithuania than in other Baltic states in the interwar period, but they had no support in the countryside. *Iron Wolf,* a fairly popular Lithuanian fascist group in the 1930s, was an integral but small fraction of the resistance. The police estimated that it had about 500 members in June 1945, but Juozas "Daumantas," a guerrilla commander, stated that its military units then had only 79 men.[2] The top leaders of *Iron Wolf* were arrested or killed in the spring of 1946, and although the group operated until the end of the resistance, its fascist aspects declined, and it eventually became a unit much like the others.[3] In other Baltic regions, fascists played an even more marginal role in the nationalist resistance.

By the time the Red Army reached Estonia, *Omakaitse* numbered 73,000 paramilitaries organized in 62 battalions.[4] In contrast to the much smaller pro-Soviet Estonian militia that had engaged in valiant fight during the retreat of the Red Army in the summer of 1941, *Omakaitse* had no inclination to offer organized resistance to the Soviets during the retreat of its

[1] Nijole Gaškaite-Žemaitiene, "The Partisan War in Lithuania from 1944 to 1953," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 2000), p. 35; Petro Sodol', *Ukraïns'ka Povstancha Armiia, 1943–1949* (New York: Prolog, 1994), pp. 63–136.

[2] Amelin, "Spisok band i antisovetskikh organizatsii deistvuiushchikh na territorii Litovskoi SSR [List of bands and anti-Soviet organizations operating on Lithuanian territory]" (June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 445, ll. 195–202; Juozas Daumantas, *Fighters for Freedom: Lithuanian Partisans versus the USSR (1944–1947)* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1975), p. 73.

[3] Poliakov, acting head of the GUBB, to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 709, l. 27; Nijole Gaškaite, Algis Kašeta, and Juozas Starkauskas, eds., *Lietuvos partizanu kovos ir ju slopinimas MVD–MGB dokumentuose* (Kaunas: Pasaulio Lietuviu Bendruomene, 1996), pp. 102, 103; Algirdas Budreckis, "Lithuanian Resistance, 1940–1952," in Albertas Gerutis, ed., *Lithuania: 700 Years* (New York: Manyland Books, 1969), p. 375.

[4] Major Chugunov, "Struktura i postroenie Omakaitse [Structure and organization of *Omakaitse*]" (25 November 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 452, l. 31; Argo Kuusik, "Estonian *Omakaitse* in 1941–1944," in Toomas Hiio, Meelis Maripuu, and Indrek Paavle, eds., *Estonia 1940–1945* (Tallinn: Estonian Foundation for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006), pp. 803–806.

German sponsors. It quietly disintegrated, but many of its members hid in the forests. So did the *SS Jagdtverband Ostland,* a group of guerrilla units organized by Germans from 120 members of the Latvian SS who were supposed to become the nuclei of pro-German armed resistance. Instead, their members joined other guerrilla bands.[5] In the following years, national guardsmen and German collaborators made the core of resistance in the Baltic provinces.[6]

Soviet officials noted that the intelligentsia were "influenced by bourgeois-nationalist ideology most of all." D. Shupikov, head of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist party, believed that "all the Lithuanian intelligentsia, with the exception of perhaps 5 to 10 percent, is against the Soviet system, and it leads the nationalist organizations."[7] Intellectuals and white-collar workers were overrepresented in the resistance, but most of them participated in the urban underground, leaving actual fighting to farmers who formed the vast majority of the guerrillas. The records of the Lithuanian MVD military tribunal give a social profile of those tried for guerrilla actions, thus excluding urban resistance: Farmers constituted 79.7 percent of the guerrillas (Table 4.1). In the Latvian northern Vidzeme region, 85.3 percent of guerrillas in 1944–1953 were former farmers.[8]

What type of farmers joined the resistance? The Communists always claimed that "*kulaks* are the social basis of nationalist resistance and its armed bands," whereas Western scholars typically stated that "the poorer population strata were better represented among the partisans than the rich."[9] Neither side supported its claims with evidence. The proportion of wealthy farmers varied across the borderland regions. In Estonia, 19.7 percent of peasants owned over 30 hectares before the Soviet reforms and were qualified as

[5] On 29 January 1947, the police captured Boris Jankavs, commander of *SS Jagdtverband Ostland*. He apparently was not an active resistance fighter; Documents No. 98 and 130 in N. I. Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), pp. 287, 380.

[6] Document No. 4 in Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody (1944–1956)* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), p. 277.

[7] Suslov, "Otchet o rabote buro TsK VKP(b) po Litve [Report of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania]" (July 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, l. 13; Shupikov, head of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party, to Shamberg (6 September 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 314, l. 9.

[8] Diana Bleiere, "Repressions against Farmers in Latvia in 1944–1953," in Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 249. The author does not say who calculated the social composition of guerrilla units and how it was done.

[9] Antanas Sniečkus, "Otchet TsK KP(b)L [Report of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (31 August 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 20, l. 2; V. Stanley Vardys, "The Partisan Movement in Postwar Lithuania," in V. Stanley Vardys, *Lithuania Under the Soviets* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 94.

TABLE 4.1 *Social Profile of Guerrillas Tried by the Lithuanian MVD Military Tribunal in 1944–1946*

	Number	Percentage
Farmers	2,681	79.7
Intellectuals and white-collar workers	534	15.9
Craftsmen	134	4.0
Students	12	0.3
Others	2	0.1
Total	3,363	100

Source: Document No. 4.5 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m.* Vol. 2 (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), pp. 81, 82.

kulaks by the Communists; in Latvia and Lithuania, 17.0 and 6.4 percent, respectively.[10] In western Ukraine, farms were much more fragmented. During 1946 in Lvov Province, Galicia, 58.2 percent of peasant households had less than 2 hectares of plough land and were regarded as poor; 39.2 percent held from 2 to 5 hectares and were identified as *seredniaks*. Only 2.6 percent of peasants had more than 5 hectares and were labeled as *kulaks*.[11] Yet anti-Soviet resistance was much stronger in Lithuania and Galicia than in Latvia and Estonia, which shows that Soviet analysts oversimplified the motivations and composition of the guerrillas.

Police statistics on the economic status of guerrillas are scattered and often allow only tentative conclusions. Obviously, peasants of all economic backgrounds fought in the guerrilla units. Soviet archives yield three sets of data that can be used for analyzing the proportional representation of various economic groups in the Lithuanian insurgency:

1. Social profile of peasant families deported for support of resistance compared with the proportion of the economic groups they represented in Lithuanian rural society.
2. Acreage of land confiscated from peasant families deported for participation in resistance.

[10] Hendrik Allik, People's Commissar of Agriculture of Estonia, "Kratkii otchet o rabote narkomata zemledeliia ESSR [Brief report of the Estonian People's Commissariat of Agriculture]" (22 January 1946), RGASPI, f. 598, op. 1, d. 3, l. 62; Mitriushkin, "O rukovodstve Latviiskoi partiinoi organizatsii sel'skim khoziaistvom [Management of agriculture by the Latvian party organization]" (24 January 1947), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 23, l. 71; B. Baranauskas, head of the Agrarian Section of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party, "Spravka o zemlepol'zovanii v Litve [Information about land use in Lithuania]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 10, l. 16.

[11] Mazepa, secretary of the L'vov Provincial Committee, "Otchet o rabote L'vovskogo Obkoma KP(b)U [Report of the L'vov Provincial Party Committee]" (February 1947), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 793, l. 49.

TABLE 4.2 *Proportional Representation of Peasants of Various Economic Backgrounds among 4,800 Peasant Families Deported in 1944–1946 from Lithuania because Their Members Had Joined the Insurgency*

	Percentage of the Three Economic Groups in Lithuania in 1946	**Percentage among the Deported Families**
Bedniaks (owning up to 10 ha)	68.1	27
Poorer *seredniaks* (owning between 10 and 20 ha)	24.8	30
Prosperous *seredniaks* and former *kulaks* (owning over 20 ha)	7.1	43

Note: "Spravka o nekotorykh sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh izmeneniiakh v krestianskikh khoziaistvakh Litovskoi SSR [Information about Some Socio-Economic Changes among Lithuanian Farms]" (August 1946), RGASPI, f.597, op.1, d.27, l. 44.

3. Social profile of peasant guerrillas tried by military tribunals for participation in armed resistance compared with the proportion of the economic groups they represented in rural society.

If the government found out that a peasant family member had joined the resistance, it exiled that family regardless of its economic status and confiscated all its assets.[12] Of 4,800 Lithuanian farm families deported because one of their members had joined the guerrillas in 1944–1947, 27 percent were *bedniaks* owning fewer than 10 hectares of land, 30 percent were *seredniaks* owning between 10 and 20 hectares, and 43 percent were prosperous *seredniaks* and former *kulaks* who owned over 20 hectares.[13] Compared with the statistics on land property, these data show the proportional representation of farmers from different economic strata in the Lithuanian insurgency (Table 4.2).

Judging from these data, the poor farmers were underrepresented among the guerrillas, whereas the wealthy were greatly overrepresented. This criterion in profiling guerrillas is supported by another criterion, the acreage of farms confiscated from guerrilla families. In 1946, the average Lithuanian farm had 9.0 hectares of land. By 1 July 1946, the Lithuanian government

[12] Document No. 4.12 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 2, p. 92.

[13] Liudas Truska, "*Voina posle voiny,*" *Rodina* 7:131, 1997. According to other police data, 4,168 families actually were deported from Lithuania in 1944–1947; Document No. 13 in Eugenijus Grunskis, ed., *Lietuvos gyventoju tremimai, 1940–1941, 1945–1953 metais* (Vilnius: Pasaulio Lietuviu Bendruomene, 1996), pp. 200, 201.

had confiscated 3,361 farms, a total of 71,478 hectares, from families whose members had joined the guerrillas.[14] Consequently, the average guerrilla family owned 21.3 hectares and belonged to the prosperous segment of the *seredniaks* and former *kulaks*. This conclusion is partially bolstered by statistics on 2,681 peasant guerrillas tried by military tribunals in Lithuania in 1944–1946 that identifies them as *kulaks, seredniaks,* and *bedniaks* but does not show the size of their land property. This makes calculations tricky because the agrarian reform of 1940 reduced all the *kulak* households to the prosperous *seredniak* level but preserved their *kulak* label. Furthermore, these data do not show the economic stratification of *seredniaks,* who made up 31.9 percent of the peasants in 1946 but 72.6 percent of those tried. However, they do show that 16.8 percent of the tried peasants were *bedniaks,* which was merely one-quarter of the *bedniak* share among the rural population, whereas *kulaks* constituted 10.6 percent – almost double the *kulak* share in the Lithuanian countryside.[15] These three sets of data on the social composition of the guerrilla movement suggest that in Lithuania, prosperous peasants were overrepresented, and their ratio increased with time, especially after the beginning of *kulak* deportations in 1948.

The Ukrainian Communist party files present more ambiguous information on the social background of guerrillas. Once Khrushchev visited two villages in Stanislav Province that were "infected with OUN banditry most of all." He was surprised to find that in the first village, *kulaks* constituted only 3.2 percent, with *seredniaks* and *bedniaks* making up 63.4 and 33.4 percent of the households, respectively. The economic composition of peasants in the second village was even more shocking for the Stalinist theorists: *Kulaks* constituted 0.4 percent, *seredniaks* 22.0 percent, and *bedniaks* 77.6 percent of the households.[16] Data on families deported in October 1947 because their relatives had joined the resistance show that, as in Lithuania, *kulaks* were overrepresented among the insurgents, but their number in western Ukraine was small, and so was their proportion among the guerrillas (Table 4.3).

While Communist stratification of rural society reflected more or less accurately the relative prosperity of peasantry in a certain region, the boundaries between the three groups were set arbitrarily. These statistics thus reveal the general trends in western Ukrainian and Lithuanian resistance, but comparison of the guerrillas' composition between these two regions with their different property-distribution patterns and different types of agriculture inevitably would be imprecise. Yet some conclusions about the social basis of the insurgency can be made. Most guerrillas in both regions were *seredniaks*.

[14] "Spravka o nekotorykh sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh izmeneniiakh v krestianskikh khoziaistvakh Litovskoi SSR [Information about some socioeconomic changes among Lithuanian farms]" (August 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 27, ll. 12, 44.

[15] Document No. 4.5 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 2, pp. 81, 82.

[16] Document No. 51 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia Nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), pp. 300, 301.

TABLE 4.3 *Economic Background of Ukrainian Families Exiled because Their Relatives Had Joined the Guerrillas, October 1947*

Provinces	*Kulaks*		*Seredniaks*		*Bedniaks*		Others	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Drogobych	432	9.6	3,146	69.8	792	17.6	137	3.0
Rovno	198	5.2	2,861	74.7	717	18.7	53	1.4
Chernovtsy	49	8.0	304	49.3	255	41.4	8	1.3
Ternopol	309	6.1	3956	78.3	778	15.4	10	0.2
Stanislav	307	6.7	3,224	70.5	1,004	21.9	40	0.9

Source: Documents No. 97, 99–101, 105 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 5, pp. 430, 436, 440, 444, 459, 460.

Although in both regions the lower-income insurgents were underrepresented, in Lithuania, the *kulaks* and prosperous *seredniaks* outnumbered the poor. *Seredniaks* were overrepresented in the western Ukrainian insurgency, but the absence of data on the economic stratification of *seredniaks* does not allow us to make a definitive conclusion on the proportional representation of wealthier and poorer *seredniaks* in the resistance. The support of the resistance by the poor in Ukraine actually was lower than these figures suggest because the UPA, unlike Baltic guerrillas, conscripted peasants, most of whom were poor. The conservative Baltic resistance attracted more wealthy farmers than OUN revolutionaries, who rejected the traditional rural hierarchy based on prosperity but valued people according to their devotion to the nationalist cause and, like the Communists, believed that taxes had to be levied predominantly on the wealthy.[17]

Generalizations in the analysis of motivations to join the resistance can be misleading. As Kalyvas observes, people can join the rebels because of

> ... variable and complex sets of heterogeneous and interacting motivations, which are affected by preferences over outcomes, beliefs about outcomes, the behaviors of others and the networks into which people are embedded, and security considerations. ... Additional factors include curiosity and the prospect of excitement and adventure, the lure of danger, the acquisition of a new and a more rewarding individual identity or moral worldview, ... and purely criminal motives.[18]

All these motivations played a role in the borderlands, but what were the dominating ones among *bedniaks* and poorer *seredniaks* who chose to fight the Communists? Farmers were affected less by ideology than urban social groups. Some peasant guerrillas shared their leaders' views about the primacy of national independence, but most were concerned with their own

[17] "*Instruktsii* [Instructions]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1716, l. 5.

[18] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 95, 96.

security and welfare. The OUN observed that peasant antipathy toward the Communists stemmed "not so much from political as from economic and religious considerations."[19] Collectivization became the largest stumbling block in relations between Soviet authorities and Ukrainian and Belorussian peasants. All farmers, wealthy and poor, dreaded it. Soviet functionaries observed in 1944 that "the rural population is concerned most of all about the prospects of collectivization. The negative attitude to the collective farms is universal."[20] The fear of collectivization fueled anti-Communist sentiments more than any other Soviet action. The anti-*kolkhoz* position of OUN and its promise of land redistribution were key to their support among peasants. Along with volunteers, UPA enlisted many conscripts. In the summer of 1943, it started to mobilize men, in some regions the men aged from 16 to 50 years old. Its summons stated that "failure to report by the deadline will be punished in accordance with martial law," which meant a death sentence for the recruit and his entire family.[21] In the first half of 1944, most UPA guerrillas probably were conscripts. In the Baltic region, the Soviet government made no attempt to launch collectivization until 1949, and the majority of poor peasants saw no reason to fight the administration that gave them land.

Many peasants found themselves among the guerrillas because of circumstances rather than devotion to the nationalist ideals. Most fugitives in 1944–1945 were not guerrillas but merely draft evaders. Peasants had no desire to enlist in foreign armies and fight for alien objectives, and many fled when German or Soviet administrations attempted to conscript them. When the Soviets returned in 1944, thousands had been hiding from German drafts for months or years. The mobilization to the Red Army sent another wave of men to the forests. In the western Ukrainian Stanislav Province, only about half the eligible recruits reported to Soviet conscription offices,[22] whereas many of the rest fled their homes. Most of them did not plan to fight but expected to hide just for a few months until war between the USSR and the Western Allies forced the Soviets to abandon the borderlands. These draft dodgers feared Soviet repressions if they returned home, and some joined the guerrillas out of desperation.

[19] OUN, "*Zvit Nr. 10* [Report no.10]" (10 November 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1695, l. 268.

[20] I. Tur, secretary of the Baranovichi Party Provincial Committee, to Ponomarenko, "Informatsiia o polozhenii v Baranovichskoi oblasti [Information about the situation in the Baranovichi Province]" (3 August 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 269, ll. 10, 11.

[21] Interrogation of V. A. Pchelianskii (22 August 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 135, l. 81v; UPA, "Summons" (16 April 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 130, l. 194; A. V. Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia v 1942–1943 rr.* (Kyiv, 1999), pp. 21, 94; Document No. 64 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996), p. 142; Document No. 47 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), p. 124; Documents No. 83, 89, 100, and 102 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 4, pp. 215, 226, 265, 271, 274.

[22] Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), p. 230.

Other farmers enlisted because they believed the nationalists, who claimed that the Soviets intended to deport all local residents to Siberia or kill them. "Maxim," a regional OUN leader in Galicia, instructed his subordinates: "The propaganda that we spread among the people should maintain that the western Ukrainians will be exterminated, exactly as the Jews were destroyed by the Germans."[23] When UPA commanders discovered an outbreak of venereal diseases among insurgents, they attributed it to "a special trick of the NKVD, which seeks to exterminate the Ukrainian people through infection."[24] Many western Ukrainian farmers with at best four years of primary school believed these tales and fled to the forests from syphilitic Muscovites.[25] After they had joined the guerrillas, many saw no way back.

4.2 Anti-Soviet Resistance after the Soviet Reoccupation of the Borderlands

Three actors participate in any insurgency: the rebels, the authorities, and the local population; sometimes there is also a fourth agent, a foreign sponsor of the insurgents. The anti-Soviet resistance set ambitious goals, but it had to rely only on its own forces. Neither Germany nor any other great power sponsored it after 1944. The *Abwehr* attempted to use nationalists to sabotage the communications behind the Red Army, but the Baltic nationalists saw no reason to interdict Soviet traffic, believing that this would be irrelevant to their goals. The UPA derailed a dozen Soviet trains in return for German weapons, but this cooperation stopped after the front line moved far westward. The Cold War had little impact on the conflict in the borderlands. The British and Americans established contacts with the Baltic and Ukrainian nationalists in 1943, which continued sporadically until the resistance ended, but they were

[23] OUN, "Zvit Nr.10" (10 November 1945). TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, d.1695, l.268.

[24] "Iavorenko," "Order No. 4 to the commanders of all formations" (8 November 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 223, l. 2. Tys-Krokhmaliuk picks up this story claiming that "NKVD agents infected with venereal disease had a right to free medical treatment if they imparted their disease to a number of women in the area in which the OUN and UPA operated. The victims were women suspected of collaboration with the Ukrainian underground," Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk, *UPA Warfare in Ukraine* (New York: Society of Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army of the United States and Canada, 1972), pp. 93, 96, 285. Soviet police never mentioned the purposeful infection of the local population in its internal correspondence. All medical services were free of charge for any Soviet citizen. Curiously, Red partisans also thought that Germans sent women infected with syphilis to partisan units; Kenneth Slepyan, "'The people's avengers': Soviet partisans, Stalinist society and the politics of resistance, 1941–1944," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1994, p. 256.

[25] A list of UPA personnel shows that the typical UPA fighter was 18 to 22 years old and had three to four years of primary education. "Darii," an OUN district leader in Lvov Province, complained that 90 percent of his OUN subordinates had only primary education; TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 361, l. 66; Document No. 59 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 5, p. 284.

interested mainly in intelligence and gave no help to the insurgents beyond moral support. British MI6 discouraged guerrilla warfare, preferring that resistance cells simply spy for Britain.[26]

The resistance organized by Ukrainian nationalists was the largest in the borderlands. At the peak of their strength in 1944, the nationalists fielded between 25,000 and 40,000 guerrillas. Since the insurgents suffered heavy losses in 1944–1945, the total number of people engaged in its activities between 1944 and 1950, including supply, training, intelligence collection, propaganda, and medical service, probably reached 400,000 men and women.[27] The Ukrainian resistance was absolutely dominated by OUN-B. OUN-M believed that armed struggle against the Soviets would be fruitless and virtually abstained from it. In the late fall of 1944, OUN-M advanced the slogan: "Not in the forests but among the people!"[28] implying that political action could be more effective than military action. However, OUN-M had little political influence after the defeat of Germany. In contrast, OUN-B was a deeply rooted underground network enjoying popular support. It exploited peasant hatred of collectivization and the Poles and inspired the resistance, harnessing it and directing it toward its own goals. The UPA was formally a supraparty armed force subordinated to the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council that was organized in July 1944 as a coalition of several nationalist groups. OUN-B, although only one member of the council, in practice controlled both the council and the UPA, imposing its ideology and maintaining

[26] George Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred: Lithuanian Nationalism during the Triple Occupation, 1939–1953," Ph.D. dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston, 2003, pp. 172, 222; Geoffrey Swain, "Divided We Fall: Division within the National Partisans of Vidzeme and Latgale, Fall 1945," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 38(2):207, 2007. Jeffrey Burds states that the United States and Britain conducted covert operations in the Soviet borderlands with the bands of nationalist resistance beginning in 1944. I found no proof supporting this claim, beyond those countries recruiting nationalists for espionage and parachuting them into the USSR. Although some American and British politicians and intelligence officers speculated about sponsoring nationalist resistance, this rhetoric had apparently no practical repercussions despite allegations by the Soviet police that it had discovered evidence of Western support for the nationalists. Most likely these allegations were made in response to pressure by their superiors to find such evidence in order to justify the anti-Western shift of foreign policy with the beginning of the Cold War. In Burds' words, "the Soviet police apparatus merely 'discovered' what their Moscow bosses ordered then to find"; Jeffrey Burds, "The Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944–1948," Vol. 1505 (*The Carl Beck Papers*, Pittsburgh: Center for Russian & East European Studies, 2001), p. 42. In June 1953, M. Krassman, minister of internal affairs of Estonia, wrote a memo devoted to the struggle against foreign intelligence agencies. He never tied their activities to armed resistance but perceived their agents merely as spies; Document No. 9 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy*, pp. 298–300. In any case, the meager Western assistance, if indeed it was given to the nationalists in the 1940s, had no impact on armed resistance in the borderlands.

[27] Sodol', *Ukraïns'ka Povstancha Armiia, 1943–1949*, p. 48; Bohdan Krawchenko, "Soviet Ukraine under Nazi Occupation 1941–1944," in Yury Boshyk, ed., *Ukraine during World War II* (Edmonton, Canada: University of Alberta, 1986), p. 30; Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii i Velykii Vitchyznianii viinakh,* p. 50.

[28] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 256.

a sophisticated civilian infrastructure for the guerrillas. The UPA was organized on a territorial basis. It had an administrative structure similar to OUN; its large operational regions were subdivided into smaller networks with code names. Its commanders planned to have four headquarters: UPA-West and UPA-North in western Ukraine and UPA-South (northern Bukovina and the southern part of central Ukraine) and UPA-East (the northern part of central Ukraine). Bandera was merely the nominal leader of the resistance. He had never been in the Soviet Union and played virtually no role in the armed struggle. After the Germans released Bandera and Stets'ko from a concentration camp in September 1944, no regular communication between them and the guerrillas existed, and the two became increasingly detached from Ukrainian realities. However, most UPA senior and medium-level commanders were OUN leaders. Dmytro Kliachkivs'kyi, UPA commander-in-chief until November of 1943, simultaneously headed the OUN Northwest region; Roman Shukhevych, who succeeded Kliachkivs'kyi as commander-in-chief, chaired the OUN-B central *provod* beginning in May 1943. The UPA kept its command infrastructure dispersed in the forests, effectively avoiding police raids. Despite their frantic efforts, the security forces were rarely able to capture senior UPA commanders.

OUN flooded western Ukraine with printed propaganda, regularly publishing two journals and countless leaflets. When the police discovered two underground presses, they were shocked by the scale of the operation. They found 60,000 pages of leaflets and brochures in one case and 90,000 pages in another[29] and this at a time when district Soviet agencies often wrote their directives on the reverse of older documents or captured German orders because of a paper deficit. OUN's political commissars, one per several villages, enforced the policy of the central *provod* and worked relentlessly to win farmers for their cause. They called mass meetings in which they explained the goals of the nationalists, paraded troops singing Ukrainian songs through villages, organized political shows and public trials of marauders, and celebrated religious holidays with the peasants. This skillful propaganda helped nationalists to attract many peasants.

Most UPA members were young. When Ivan Lytvynchuk became commander of UPA-North in 1945, he was 28 years old, as was Vasyl' Halasa when he was appointed head of the OUN northwest region; Dmytro Kliachkivs'kyi became the UPA commander-in-chief at age 32, and Roman Shukhevych was 36 when he replaced Kliachkivs'kyi. Rank-and-file members were much younger than their leaders. Youthful ardor and courage, coupled with radical ideology, ensured that the UPA would offer fierce resistance: Its fighters were the most stubborn among anti-Soviet guerrillas. OUN instructions stated: "Nobody should be captured by the enemy alive,"[30] and many guerrillas honored this order. If a police unit discovered an underground bunker, a typical guerrilla

[29] Documents No. 4 and 53 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 7, pp. 87, 311.
[30] Beria to Stalin (6 January 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 92, l. 52.

hideout in forestless Ukraine, it surrounded the position and ordered its inhabitants to surrender. Those who did usually were taken prisoner, but as a rule, the guerrillas responded by throwing hand grenades from the bunker, followed by a desperate dash for a breakthrough; they were invariably mowed down by machine guns. Other cornered insurgents, men and women, replied, "Ukrainian heroes don't surrender!" and blew themselves up with grenades held by their heads so that police could not identify their bodies.[31] In January 1947, a police unit surrounded a bunker with Mykola Arsenych, the head of SB, his wife, and a liaison woman. The guerrillas shot back at the police while burning the documents, after which Arsenych killed the women and shot himself. Another report states that the police detained the father of a guerrilla and ordered him to show where his son was hiding. The man led the police platoon to a cliff and jumped down from a height of 100 meters to his death. When a security unit cornered a guerrilla in Milostuv Village, he slit his own throat with a razor.[32] Police files contain dozens of similar reports. Ukrainian guerrillas fought with a resolution that no resistance in western Europe could have imagined.

When the Red Army approached the western borderlands in early 1944, UPA commanders overestimated their own strength. Some of them fantasized that they could capture Kiev before the Red Army did and block the latter at the Dnepr.[33] Anticipating large engagements with the Soviet forces, Ukrainian guerrillas organized large formations. UPA battalions up to 600 men strong readily engaged Red Army or NKVD security units in conventional combat. The Soviets employed tanks and air force against the UPA in several battles. The police recorded that the guerrillas "fought quite actively, sometimes recklessly sacrificing themselves." On 9 April 1944, the UPA attacked a dug-in NKVD company three times with the war cry, "Glory to Ukraine!" and each time was repulsed, losing, according to a Soviet account, 300 men.[34] Borovets observed that "almost every such prolonged battle was lost" and explained why: "It was not professional officers who commanded [UPA] units but inexperienced party leaders ignorant in tasks and tactics of partisan warfare." The UPA did score a few impressive successes when it mortally wounded General Nikolai Vatutin, commander of the First Ukrainian Front, in February 1944

[31] Fadeev to Burmak, "Operativnaia svodka nr.6 [Report on actions no. 6]" (13 July 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 145, l. 400.

[32] Kruglov to Stalin (29 January 1947), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 168, ll. 144, 244; General F. Mazhirin to Leont'ev, "Operativnaia svodka nr. 6 [Operative report no. 6]" (1 February 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 584, l. 12; Senior Lieutenant Ratner, acting commander of the 18th Rifle Brigade, "Opisanie operativno-boevykh deistvii [Report on actions]" (24 March 1944), *Peter Potichnyj Collection on Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Ukraine*, hereafter cited as PC], reel 54.

[33] Sen'gora (no date), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 44, l. 634.

[34] General Marchenkov, "Operativania svodka nr. 28 [Operative report no. 28]" (9 April 1944), PC, reel 17, p. 181; General Ovchinnikov, "Konspekt Kremenetskoi operatsii [Summary of the Kremenets operation]" (12–28 April 1944), PC, reel 17, p. 303; Kiriushin, acting head of NKVD troops in Belorussia (1 July 1944), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 128, ll. 44–48.

and then ambushed and destroyed a regular Soviet rifle battalion in August.[35] Usually, however, the NKVD divisions promptly cornered and annihilated large guerrilla units because western Ukraine had few extensive forests to give them cover. The UPA *Zagrava* group, the strongest in Volhynia, lost half its strength during 1944 and 47 of the 50 company commanders.[36] By 1945, the UPA had suffered prohibitive casualties. Its commanders realized, belatedly, that their tactics were poor. In February 1945, they ordered their battalions to avoid conventional combat and split them into platoons or sections.[37] Some guerrillas lived as ordinary farmers and gathered only for missions, whereas others were full-time fighters. The police needed better intelligence and greater effort to eradicate this network of small cells engaged mainly in terrorism against local collaborators – Communists and Komsomol members, administrators, militia, and other supporters of the authorities. By this time, however, the flower of UPA manpower had withered; it never recovered from its horrendous losses of the first year after Soviet reoccupation (Table 4.4).

The UPA contained a small proportion of East Ukrainians, mainly former POWs who had found themselves in the western provinces after they had been released by the Germans or had escaped POW camps. OUN mistrusted them and treated them as second-rate expendable fighters. East Ukrainians complained that they received the worst weapons, were assigned to the most dangerous missions, and were never promoted above the rank of private.[38] The UPA attempted to imitate Red partisan strategy, raiding pre-1939 Ukrainian regions in order to transplant nationalist insurgency there, but found few supporters. East Ukrainians, six times as numerous as Galicians, scorned the self-proclaimed bearers of Ukrainian identity. When three UPA battalions entered central Ukraine (which was overrun by the Red Army) in the spring of 1944, they were quickly destroyed.[39] Unlike the Red partisans, nationalists were never able to establish a base in the forests of northern Ukraine. UPA-East never materialized; likewise, UPA-South was disbanded in the summer of 1944. Sergei Tkachenko observes that the success of Soviet security forces "was caused to a large and perhaps decisive degree by the conformist position of a significant part of Ukrainian society that absolutely rejected the idea of an independent Ukraine."[40] Statistics on the deaths of nationalist guerrillas and their victims for the first half of 1945 reflect this difference between western and Soviet Ukraine (Tables 4.5 and 4.6).

[35] "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 2:109, 1995; Taras Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy* (Winnipeg, Canada: Volyn, 1981), p. 273; Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia,* p. 88.

[36] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, p. 239.

[37] Ibid., p. 261.

[38] Ibid., p. 83.

[39] Interrogation of V. A. Pchelianskii (22 August 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 135, ll. 80v, 81.

[40] Sergei Tkachenko, *Povstancheskaia armiia: taktika bor'by* (Minsk: Harvest, 2000), pp. 66, 171.

TABLE 4.4 *Casualties of Guerrillas and "Other Anti-Soviet Elements," 1944–1946*

	1944				1945				1946			
	Total	**Killed**	**Arrested**	**Surrendered**	**Total**	**Killed**	**Arrested**	**Amnestied**	**Total**	**Killed**	**Arrested**	**Amnestied**
W. Uk	123,782	57,405	50,387	15,990	129,016	45,956	65,778	17,282	29,480	10,862	14,550	4,068
Lith	15,109	2,436	12,673	235	40,541	9,673	24,604	6,264	9,381	2,110	6,625	646
Lat	111	37	28	46	7,018	1,071	3,315	2,632	3,242	387	1,711	1,144
Est	486	14	472	-	5,671	332	3,716	1,623	1,487	229	569	689
W. Bel	3,606	613	2,880	113	8,269	1,667	5,801	801	1,449	108	1,324	17

Notes: Colonel Zadoia, Deputy Head of GUBB, "Spravka o rezul'tatakh bor'by s ounovskim banditizmom [Fight against OUN's Banditry]" (5 April 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.349, l. 1; Sniečkus, "Otchet TsK KP(b)L o vypolnenii postanovleniia TsK VKP(b) [Report of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist Party about Implementation of the Directive of the VKP(b) CC]" (31 August 1946), RGASPI, f.597, op.1, d.20, l. 6; Leont'ev to Kruglov (2 April 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.279, l. 10; Poliakov to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.709; Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom*, pp. 154, 156. These data, compiled by the police on an annual basis, differ slightly from the final summary. The numbers of surrendered and amnestied guerrillas apparently exclude draft evaders uninvolved in resistance who reported to a military conscription office and were duly enlisted in the Red Army. The numbers of "liquidated" guerrillas are probably inflated and include an unknown proportion of civilians.

TABLE 4.5 *Deaths of Anti-Soviet Guerrillas in Western and Pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine, January–June 1945*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total	%
Western Ukraine	8,621	7,307	9,137	6,097	2,688	2,511	33,361	99.2
Soviet Ukraine	82	49	13	28	31	61	264	0.8

Notes: Lieutenant-Colonel Burylin, Acting Head of the Ukrainian UBB (31 March 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op.1, d.494, ll. 59–62; Leont'ev to Kruglov, (14 August 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.494, l. 188; Colonel Zadoiia, Deputy Head of GUBB, "Spravka o rezul'tatakh bor'by s ounovskim banditizmom [Fight against OUN Banditry]" (5 April 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.349, ll. 1–13; Major-General Gorshkov, "Tablitsa sravnitel'nykh dannykh ob itogakh likvidatsii banditizma [Statistics of the Results of the Fight against Banditry]" (April–June 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.309, 310, 311.

TABLE 4.6 *Deaths Inflicted by Anti-Soviet Guerrillas and Bandits in Western and Pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine, January–June 1945*

	Western Ukraine		Soviet Ukraine		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
Police officers	275	90.8	28	9.2	303
NKVD and Red Army officers	52	92.9	4	7.1	56
Soldiers and sergeants	593	98.7	8	1.3	601
Militia	616	96.7	21	3.3	637
Soviet activists	455	94.0	29	6.0	484
Civilians	2,724	97.4	74	2.6	2,798
Total	4,715	96.6	164	3.4	4,879

Notes: GARF, f. 9478, op.1, d.349, ll. 1–13; d.494, ll. 59–62, 188; d.309, 310, 311.

The proportion of the casualties is particularly striking if the size of populations is taken into account: five times as many ethnic Ukrainians lived in Soviet Ukraine as in its western regions.[41] This shows that the vast majority of Ukrainians opposed nationalists.

About 100,000 Lithuanians participated in guerrilla activity between 1944 and 1950.[42] Like the UPA, the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK) initially planned to stop the Red Army in pitched battles at the Lithuanian frontiers but later abandoned this scheme and called Balts to

[41] In 1939, ethnic Ukrainian population of western Ukraine was slightly over 5 million, whereas that of Soviet Ukraine was 24.0 million; Iu. A. Poliakov et al., eds., *Vsesoiuznaia perepis' naseleniia 1939 goda* (Moscow, Nauka, 1992), p. 21.

[42] Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States* (London: Hurst & Co, 1993), p. 86.

resist passively.[43] The immediate goal was not independence but to avoid conscription, arrests, and deportations and maintain strong patriotic sentiments, thus letting the nationalists raise the people when the Western Allies and the Soviet Union went to war. However, anti-Soviet resistance in Lithuania was anything but passive because the Lithuanian Liberation Army (LLA) and other radical groups rejected this strategy. LLA had its own general headquarters that did not regard itself as bound by VLIK's decisions and only loosely controlled its units, which were raised on a territorial principle. A crucial difference emerged between moderate urban committees who viewed themselves as political leaders of the Lithuanian nationalists and oriented to long-term political struggle and radical rural resistance opting for immediate action. VLIK had little influence in the countryside. When the police arrested most of its members in December 1944, the epicenter of resistance moved to the countryside, and the arrest of the remaining VLIK members in Marijampole Province in October 1945 and in Vilnius in March 1946[44] had no impact on the armed resistance. LLA, however, saw no reason to confront the Red Army or NKVD troops. Instead, commanders hoped to paralyze Soviet authority in the countryside by fighting "without compromises and scruples" the district police, informers, the militia, and Soviet administrators until the West would come and liberate Lithuania.[45]

Like UPA, Lithuanian guerrillas also initially tried to operate in large units, but the fairly good communication network allowed the police to quickly bring in reinforcements after they spotted large bands and then to destroy them. The guerrilla battalion of 358 men operating in Vilnius Province survived for only one month. Security troops cornered it on 5 January 1945 and killed 132 fighters, capturing the rest. A unit of 194 men was destroyed in Rokiškis Province on 15 January 1945: 131 guerrillas were killed and 13 taken prisoner. Police surrounded a band of 218 men in Marijampole Province on 16 April 1945: 129 were killed and the rest captured. After several other large units suffered the same fate, Lithuanian resistance dispersed remaining guerrillas into sections in the summer of 1945.[46]

Like the Ukrainians, Lithuanian insurgents also often fought to the last man. A police report describes how in January 1945 security troops surrounded a house containing 25 guerrillas, who continued fighting even after the soldiers had set the house on fire. Five guerrillas broke out and crawled across the field toward the machine gun crew shooting at the house in the hope

[43] Truska, "*Voina posle voiny,*" p. 131.

[44] Documents No. 111 and 121 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom*, pp. 313, 345.

[45] LLA GHQ, Order No. 4 (10 December 1944), *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voennyi arkhiv* [Russian State Military Archive, hereafter cited as RGVA], f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, ll. 79–81.

[46] Senior Lieutenant Shcherbakov, "Spravka o likvidirovannykh polnost'iu i chatichno banditskikh grupp [Report on the bandit groups completely and partially destroyed]" (April 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 445, ll. 5–8, 102, 103; Efimov to Beria (21 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 171.

of helping their comrades to escape. They were shot one by one but continued to advance until the last one died 40 meters from the machine gun. Only one man surrendered. The rest resisted until the house collapsed and buried them.[47]

In contrast to Ukrainian nationalists, Baltic resistance rarely used an ethnic criterion in identifying the enemy after extermination of the Jews. How far the nationalists were anti-Semitic afterward is hard to say because almost all Baltic Jews were killed or deported. The LLA did boast that in 1941 "our partisans cleansed our country of Red Jewish bandits,"[48] but later publications of the Baltic resistance, unlike those of OUN, show no ethnic intolerance. Ukrainian nationalists regarded Russians, Jews, and Poles as enemies, whatever their attitude toward communism, but the Baltic resistance did not attack Russian, Belorussian, or Polish civilians uninvolved in administration.

The number of Lithuanian insurgents remained fairly steady between January and August 1945 despite heavy losses, which shows that they had considerable reserves among civilians. In 1944 and 1945, Soviet power in Lithuania rested on bayonets, but two security divisions were insufficient to control the rural regions. The NKVD reported in June 1945 that in much of Lithuania "there is no trace of Soviet authority: Republican leaders do not visit the countryside, functionaries of the provincial party and administrative agencies do not travel beyond district centres, and officials of the district centres do not visit villages and homesteads."[49] By terrorizing the Soviet administration, the guerrillas controlled much of the rural regions. Soviet functionaries felt insecure even in provincial centers, where sometimes they fell victim to guerrilla terror. For instance, in February 1947, Aneli Senkute, an accountant of the Marijampole District Executive Committee and liaison for the *Vampiras* guerrilla unit, invited several Soviet functionaries to her wedding party. At the peak of revelry, the bride and groom's men shot dead the first secretary of the Provincial Party Committee, the chair of the District Executive Committee, a local police officer, and three other guests. Vladimir Shcherbakov, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, commented that "scum is hiding behind every corner, in every forest and grove."[50]

UPA's command structure was centralized, and so was its strategy. By contrast, Lithuanian resistance consisted of several networks: LLA coexisted with

[47] Morozov, acting chief of staff of the 4th Rifle NKVD Division, "Opisanie boevykh deistvii [Report on actions]" (27 January 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 157, ll. 2, 3.

[48] Document No. 48 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom*, p. 177.

[49] "Spravka o meropriiatiiakh po usileniiu bor'by s banditizmom v Litovskoi SSR [The steps aimed at intensification of the fight against banditry in Lithuania]" (12 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 6.

[50] Colonel Kulichenok, head of the Marijampole Provincial MVD Section (20 February 1947), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 34, l. 64; "Zasedanie Biuro TsK VKP(b) po Litovskoi SSR [Conference of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania]" (20 February 1947), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 34, l. 58; Head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania V. Shcherbakov, "O merakh po uslileniiu

Kestutis, a smaller but similar guerrilla force; the Lithuanian Partisan Union, an underground network with a large urban component founded in April 1945; and other smaller groups. All Lithuanian resistance factions pursued the same immediate goal: armed struggle for independence. None sought to subordinate other factions by force. The fragmented resistance attempted to unify itself only in February 1949, organizing the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement,[51] an agency intended to coordinate guerrillas and the urban underground. However, its control over insurgents remained loose; its leaders never could develop a coherent strategy and make the guerrillas obey their orders. Most guerrilla units followed general guidelines sent from above, but their policies varied with their commanders, and they fought independent wars against the Soviets.

It was easy for the NKVD to decapitate the Lithuanian resistance groups because much of their command infrastructure rested in cities, where it was vulnerable to police raids. NKVD destroyed the LLA general headquarters in January 1945, killing its commander-in-chief, Kazys Veverkis; in the same year, it arrested two of his successors, Adolfas Eidimtas and Motiejus Pečiulionis, and a number of other top leaders.[52] Algirdas Budreckis concludes that "centralization was never really completed, because leaders and liaison men were continually being arrested or killed."[53]

These arrests eliminated experienced politicians from the Lithuanian resistance. Command passed into the hands of former officers, who lived with the guerrillas in the countryside. NKVD identified four of the six commanders of LLA guerrilla districts in 1945, and all were officers of the Lithuanian Army and police: a general, a lieutenant-colonel, a major, and an NCO. Professional soldiers also commanded guerrilla units. Some were good tacticians, but none was a sound strategist. They viewed guerrilla warfare merely as a peculiar type of military operation, paying little attention to its political side.[54] The absence of strategy, a vulnerable command infrastructure, and neglect of the political aspects of guerrilla warfare undermined the effort of the resistance to rally Lithuanians against Soviet power.

bor'by s kulatsko-natsionalisticheskimi bandami v Alytusskom uezde [Intensification of the fight against *kulak*-nationalist banditry in the Alytus Province]" (21 June 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 19, l. 6.

[51] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 87.

[52] "Spravka o meropriiatiiakh po usileniiu bor'by s banditizmom v Litovskoi SSR [The steps aimed at intensification of the fight against banditry in Lithuania]" (12 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 4; Sniečkus, "Otchet TsK KP(b)L o vypolnenii postanovleniia TsK VKP(b)," l. 7; L. Tkachenko to Leont'ev (11 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 157; L. Tkachenko to Leont'ev, "Spetssoobshcheniie [Special report]" (6 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 70.

[53] Budreckis, "Lithuanian Resistance," p. 364.

[54] Sergei V. Zubrenkov, "Vooruzhennoe protivodeistvie natsionalistov Sovetskoi vlasti v Litve," Ph.D. dissertation, Moscow State University, 1999, pp. 88, 89; Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 87.

Some authors estimate that 40,000 Latvians and 30,000 Estonians were involved in armed resistance at one time or another.[55] These figures are inflated because Estonian and Latvian guerrilla casualties were much lower than the Lithuanian or Ukrainian casualties per capita. Latvians and Estonians desired independence no less than the Lithuanians, but fewer believed they could succeed without a foreign sponsor. In Latvia, as in Lithuania, former military officers and policemen dominated the resistance.[56] It stemmed from several groups: the Latvian Partisan Union for the Defense of the Motherland, the Latvian National Partisan Union, the Partisans of Northern Latvia, and Latvian Self-Defense. The first two attempted to coordinate their actions, but the police destroyed their general headquarters in 1945–1946, killing and arresting their top leaders: Antons Juhnevičs, chair of presidium of the Latvian Partisan Union for the Defense of the Motherland; Karlis Blums, its vice president; Janis Zelčans, its secretary; Peteris Supe, leader of the Latvian National Partisan Union, and Peteris Bukš, his successor; and Plaudis, leader of Latvian Self-Defense, and his deputy.[57] The Latvian Central Council encouraged the guerrillas to abstain from actions but preserve their forces until the anticipated invasion of the West.[58] Until the fall of 1945, the Latvian guerrillas "constituted a mass movement of volunteers keen to take part in a *brief campaign* which would give coherence to a popular insurrection *supported from abroad*."[59] Once they realized foreign help was not forthcoming, they lost interest in the insurgency. The government firmly controlled most of the Latvian countryside even in 1945, although guerrillas could ban the Soviet administration from several remote rural regions for about a year after the reoccupation of Latvia.

In Estonia, the resistance was even weaker, being totally decentralized and without political leadership after the fall of 1944, when the police captured most members of the underground Republic National Committee and other prominent politicians, including Jaan Maide, deputy head of *Omakaitse*.[60] NKVD had preventively arrested about a thousand *Omakaitse* activists – a logical target for repressions – between October 1944 and July 1945, crippling the only network that could have organized the resistance. No important

[55] Rein Taagepera, *Estonia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), p. 79; Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 86; Mart Laar, *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival* (Washington: The Compass Press, 1992), p. 24.

[56] Heinrihs Strods, "Resistance in Latvia, 1944–1991," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia,* p. 288; Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), pp. 164, 165.

[57] Poliakov to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 709, ll. 31–37; Beria to Stalin (6 August 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 98, l. 121; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi*, pp. 467–472.

[58] Swain, "Divided We Fall," pp. 207, 208.

[59] Ibid., p. 211 (emphasis is mine).

[60] Glushanin, "Svodnaia spravka o rezul'tatakh bor'by s antisovetskim podpol'em i vooruzhennymi bandami [Report about the fight against the anti-Soviet underground and armed bands]"

political underground groups existed during the first two years of the Soviet reoccupation. The Union for Armed Struggle, the only political underground agency that had branches in several provinces, emerged in the summer of 1946. It was dominated by intellectuals and former army officers, but their actions were few and weak. They had virtually no influence on armed resistance, and the police destroyed this network between 1947 and 1949, killing and arresting its 266 members.[61] Soviet officials in Estonia wrote that "no serious clashes [with the guerrillas] ever took place," and "anti-Soviet actions are relatively rare."[62] Estonian guerrillas operated in small units and engaged primarily in terrorism. Without political leadership, those who hid in the forests preferred to accept government amnesties instead of joining the guerrillas. If the proportion of killed guerrillas to those who surrendered during amnesties illustrates their determination, resistance was most stubborn in western Ukraine and Lithuania and least resolute in Latvia and Estonia (Table 4.7).

The Germans met little armed opposition after they occupied western Ukraine and the Baltic region, whereas the Soviets faced a fierce guerrilla war when they returned. However, popular attitudes toward the German and Soviet administrations moved in opposite directions. While sentiments toward Germany turned from euphoria to disappointment and in western Ukraine and Belorussia to armed resistance, the number of willing and unwilling collaborators with the Soviet regime steadily increased. The Soviets faced a greater challenge in the Baltic region, however, than in the other western areas. The living standard of the Balts was higher than in the Soviet Union, western Ukraine, and Belorussia. The political left was weak and could not be significantly reinforced by the migration of Communists of Baltic origin from the USSR. The cultural barrier between the Soviets and the Balts was higher than between the Slavic populations of the old territories and the borderlands, and the Soviets could not pose as protectors of local culture from alien oppression. Nationalism was strong throughout the Baltic region, yet anti-Soviet resistance was fiercest in western Ukraine and Lithuania, the least modern of the Baltic states. Soviet revolutionary methods disrupted local traditions more in these regions with a larger proportion of peasants, who were less educated, more conservative, more religious, more influenced by authoritarian political culture, and more confident that armed resistance could win against all odds than were the populations of Latvia and Estonia.

(31 December 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 450, l. 3; Document No. 55 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* p. 192.

[61] "Dokladnaia zapiska o rezul'tatakh bor'by s banditizmom i antisovetskim podpol'em v Estonskoi SSR [Report about the fight against banditry and the anti-Soviet underground in Estonia]" (1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 452, l. 168; Documents No. 34 and 61 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* pp. 125, 210; Document No. 8 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy,* pp. 293, 294.

[62] Shatalin to Stalin (17 May 1945), GARF, f. 17, op. 122, d. 94, l. 138; *Vnutrennie voiska v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaia literatuta, 1975), p. 652.

TABLE 4.7 *Proportion of Killed versus Amnestied Guerrillas in Western Ukraine and the Baltic Region*

	1945					1946				
	Total casualties	Killed	%	Amnestied	%	Total casualties	Killed	%	Amnestied	%
Western Ukraine	129,016	45,956	36	17,282	13	29,480	10,862	37	4,068	14
Lithuania	40,541	9,673	24	6,264	16	9,381	2,110	23	646	7
Latvia	7,018	1,071	15	2,632	38	3,242	387	12	1,144	35
Estonia	5,671	332	6	1,623	29	1,487	229	15	689	46

Note: The total guerrillas' casualties include those killed, arrested, and amnestied. Amnestied draft evaders are excluded.

Source: Poliakov to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.709, ll. 7, 8, 25, 35, 42. These data compiled by the police on an annual basis differ slightly from the final summary.

Most western Belorussians were uneasy about rather than hostile toward the Soviet authority. The Belorussian nationalists, mostly polonized Catholics who, according to an SD report, "looked at Belorussia through Polish eyes," had never enjoyed popular support among the predominantly Orthodox West Belorussians,[63] and since they had collaborated with the Germans even more than OUN-M, they had no prestige after the Germans evacuated the borderlands. Absence of nationalist sentiments and the grim experience of German occupation made Soviet policy acceptable. Police statistics identify the ethnic background of anti-Soviet guerrillas in Belorussia only between March and May 1945, indicating that virtually no Belorussian resistance emerged in the western part of this republic, although the police arrested a few Belorussian "bandits" who offered no armed resistance – probably collaborators and criminals. Belorussia was the only western region where the government abstained from mass deportations after 1944 because opposition among Belorussians was negligible (Table 4.8).

The UPA raided western Belorussia from time to time, mainly for purposes of propaganda, hoping to ignite an anti-Soviet nationalist movement, but its calls to fight against Russian imperialism fell on deaf ears. NKVD files show that western Belorussians neither supported the UPA nor opposed it. The UPA could not establish a permanent base in Belorussia, and security forces had flushed it out by late 1945. As in Ukraine, the statistics on guerrilla casualties in Belorussia show the virtual absence of anti-Soviet resistance in the old territories (Table 4.9).

The major Soviet opponent in western Belorussia was AK, with 20,000 members there and 17,000 more in Vilnius Province.[64] AK had the largest

[63] Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* p. 52.

[64] "Soobshchenie [Report]" (no date), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 354, l. 22; A. F. Makarevich, "Novyi vzgliad na dokumenty Natsional'nogo arkhiva Respubliki Belarus' o bor'be s fashistskoi agressiei," *Otechestvennye arkhivy* 3:33, 1994.

TABLE 4.8 *Ethnic Profile of the Anti-Soviet Guerrillas Killed and Arrested in Belorussia, March–May 1945*

	March		April		May	
	Killed	Arrested	Killed	Arrested	Killed	Arrested
Belorussian	0	36	0	3	0	1
Polish	128	372	98	146	31	46
UPA	53	46	14	38	9	5

Source: Bel'chenko to Leont'ev, "Statisticheskie dannye o rezul'tatakh bor'by s banditizmom [Statistics on the Fight against Banditry]" (March-May 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.416, ll. 24–83.

TABLE 4.9 *Casualties of Anti-Soviet Guerrillas in Western and Pre-1939 Soviet Belorussia, 1944–1945*

	1944				1945			
	Western Belorussia		Soviet Belorussia		Western Belorussia		Soviet Belorussia	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Killed	613	98.2	11	1.8	1,335	99.6	6	0.4
Arrested	2,880	94.4	170	5.6	2,878	98.8	34	1.2

Source: Leont'ev to Kruglov (2 April 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.279, l. 10; Bel'chenko, "Statisticheskie dannye o rezultatax borby s banditismom po Belorusskoi SSR [Data on the Fight against Banditry in Belorussia]," GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.416.

urban component and proportion of professional military officers among its leaders compared with other nationalist groups. The resentment of ethnic majorities unified Poles of various social groups, and Polish resistance had more cross-class character than other nationalist movements. AK mobilized for Operation *Tempest,* oriented to large-scale conventional actions against the Germans, and fought in brigades of 300 to 800 men.[65]

When the Red Army entered the disputed territories, AK launched attacks on German garrisons in Lvov, Rovno, Belostok, Lublin, and Vilnius. About 7,000 Polish guerrillas took part in the attack on Lvov.[66] The Soviet leaders had no policy toward AK, viewing it as unimportant, and field commanders received no instructions about it. They often ignored the political affiliation of anti-Nazi guerrillas and cooperated through parallel rather than coordinated actions. Some generals even concluded formal agreements with AK. The commander of the 277th Soviet Rifle Division, which took Vilnius, shared his intelligence with the Poles and later issued a statement: "I, General Belkin,

[65] Beria to Stalin (29 June 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 65, ll. 271–273.
[66] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 173.

confirm that the Polish soldiers fought well during the battle of Wilno and praise them for their actions. The [AK] Brigade should be granted all possible privileges."[67]

This honeymoon was short. AK's hope that its guerrillas could overcome German garrisons and present the Soviets a fait accompli of Polish administration loyal to the government-in-exile was unrealistic. The Germans suppressed the major attempts to implement this strategy, the uprisings in Vilnius and Lvov in July, inflicting heavy losses on Polish resistance. Even if AK had succeeded in overcoming the German garrisons, the Soviets would not have recognized the administration that it would have established. After the Red Army entered Poland, the bargaining position of the government-in-exile vanished. On 23 July 1944, the Soviets established the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PCNL), an alternative pro-Communist Polish government in Lublin, and recognized it as the "only legitimate temporary organ of executive power."[68] The PCNL promised to cede the disputed regions to the Soviet Union in the treaty concluded on 26–27 July. In response, the Soviet leaders declared another amnesty to all Polish citizens who served prison terms in the USSR, except those sentenced for grave crimes.[69]

After Operation *Tempest* failed, the Red Army found in its rear large AK units that refused to recognize its authority and scorned the PCNL. AK general headquarters instructed field commanders as follows:

> Ignore all orders and decrees issued by the PCNL. … No one should report to the conscription offices. … In case of repressions in the regions where people refused to report, defence should be passive. … If this is insufficient, resort to active self-defence. If, in the latter case, Soviet troops arrive for punitive actions, switch to passive self-defence.[70]

This order was too ambiguous to be carried out. Unit commanders could not follow the complicated maneuvers prescribed by the government-in-exile and interpreted these instructions according to their own judgment. No army would tolerate a guerrilla force with an independent and often hostile agenda behind its front, and the Red Army routinely disarmed irregulars in regions it overran, including Red partisans. Being short of manpower, the Soviets enforced mobilization of Poles and crushed anyone who opposed it. Most important, AK was a popular representative of the government demanding return of the disputed territories. These factors made conflict between the Soviets and Polish nationalists inevitable.

[67] Document No. 1 in A. F. Noskova and T. V. Volokitina, eds., *NKVD i pol'skoe podpol'e, 1944–1945* (Moscow: Institut slavianovedeniia i balkanistiki RAN, 1994), p. 32.

[68] Ibid., pp. 223, 229.

[69] Document No. 45 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* p. 171.

[70] AK GHQ, "Direktivy o povedenii v nastoiashchii moment [Orders on current policy]" (1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 67, ll. 68, 69.

After the PCNL was established, Moscow prohibited any further cooperation with AK and ordered commanders to disarm Polish guerrillas, intern their officers, and enlist their rank and file into the 1st Polish Army fighting under Soviet operational command. Often disarmament went smoothly because AK members were unwilling to fight the Soviets: 6,000 fighters surrendered their weapons within two days in July 1944, and Beria claimed that "as a rule, 10 to 15 soldiers disarmed 200 to 300 Poles."[71] However, this process was not always that idyllic. Some Soviet partisan and Red Army field commanders played dirty tricks to deceive the Poles. On 17 July, the Soviets invited Alexander Krzyzanowski, commander of AK units in Lithuania and Belorussia, and all his senior officers who led the attack on the German garrison in Vilnius to the headquarters of the 3rd Belorussian Front, allegedly to discuss joint actions; they then arrested the Poles and disarmed their units.[72] The Markov partisan brigade that had given AK weapons treacherously attacked its former allies and shot 30 of their fighters.[73] Most AK forces were disarmed or destroyed before they could disperse, but some escaped and turned to guerrilla actions against the Soviets in violation of orders. They attacked soldiers sent to enforce conscription, robbed stores to raise funds, assassinated Communist officials, and attempted to prevent the expulsion of Poles from the disputed territories to Poland.[74]

Meanwhile, the Red Army quickly advanced across the disputed territories. On 8 July, the Stavka (Soviet General Headquarters) determined the final aim of the summer campaign: The 1st Belorussian Front had "to reach the Vistula on a wide front and to secure a bridgehead at its western bank."[75] The Soviet General Staff believed that the Red Army would be unable to continue the advance beyond the Vistula because its supply lines were overextended during the 500-kilometer march, and the tank armies spearheading the offensive had exhausted their striking capacity. The Stavka planned no forcing of the Vistula at Warsaw: By this time, it had learned that frontal assaults on large cities across wide rivers cost many lives; such cities, however, could fall without fight if defenders' communications were severed. Accordingly, the Stavka focused on capturing bridgeheads on the western bank of the Vistula away from Warsaw that would enable it to resume the offensive directly toward Germany after a several-month break needed to replenish supplies, weapons, and manpower. Warsaw was to be surrounded by minor envelopments. Bor-Komorowski, however, presumed wrongly that Warsaw would be the major

[71] Document No. 8 in T. V. Volokitina et al. eds., *Sovetskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope, 1944–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999), p. 66.

[72] Documents No. 1 and 2 in Noskova and Volokitina, *NKVD i pol'skoe podpol'e,* pp. 33–36.

[73] Tamara Smolina, surgeon with the 2nd Shock Army, "Zaiavlenie [statement]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 44, ll. 156–160.

[74] Documents No. 49 and 50 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* pp. 179–181.

[75] Georgii Zhukov, *Vospominaniia i Razmyshleniia* (Moscow: APN, 1969), pp. 568, 569.

goal of the Soviet summer offensive.[76] Neither he nor the government-in-exile attempted to coordinate actions with the Red Army because they believed this would compromise AK as an independent force. The Polish leaders did inform Churchill of the forthcoming uprising in Warsaw and asked for British military assistance. On 28 July, three days before the beginning of the uprising, they received the British reply: "There is nothing that His Majesty's Government can do in this connection."[77] Meanwhile, the German intelligence service found out that AK was planning a major action in Warsaw.[78]

In late July, the Red Army captured several bridgeheads on the western bank of the Vistula 50 kilometers to the south of Warsaw and then attacked Praga, Warsaw's suburb on the eastern bank of the Vistula. When AK commanders heard the Soviet barrage at Praga, they gave a signal for the uprising, and AK captured about half the city. However, all bridges across the Vistula remained in German hands. Furthermore, the Red Army had overlooked a large concentration of German forces to the northeast of Praga: four tank divisions and one infantry division. These divisions struck at the flank of the Soviet 2nd Tank Army advancing toward Praga and forced it to go on the defensive at 12:00 noon on 1 August, five hours before the beginning of the uprising.[79] It could not hold its position, and the Germans drove it away from Praga to a distance of about 40 kilometers, but the Soviets preserved the bridgehead on the western bank of the Vistula.[80] The uprising thus started, although the AK commanders knew that the Western Allies could not help. The Germans had an overwhelming superiority in weapons, and the surprise factor had gone; contact with the Red Army had not been established; and a German counteroffensive against the 2nd Tank Army had begun.

It took the Red Army six weeks to defeat the German divisions concentrated to the east of the Vistula. On 14 September, the Red Army finally took Praga in heavy fighting, losing, according to the Germans, 87 tanks.[81] Only then could the Stavka consider help for the Polish insurgents. However, by this time, the Germans had already recaptured most of the city and blown up all the bridges connecting Praga to Warsaw. The Red Army could have tried to launch a major frontal assault across the 800-meter-wide river in the center of Warsaw where the insurgents still held their positions. This would have

[76] J. K. Zawodny, *Nothing but Honor* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), p. 213.

[77] Jan Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Uprising* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 67.

[78] Zawodny, *Nothing but Honor,* p. 52.

[79] Ibid., p. 73; P. N. Pospelov et al., eds., *Istoriia Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiiny Sovetskogo Soiuza,* Vol. 4 (Moscow: Ministry of Defence, 1961–1964), p. 244.

[80] General Konstantin Rokossovskii claimed that the 2nd Tank Army was driven back at a distance of 100 kilometers from Warsaw, but the Soviet official history of World War II shows that it retreated for about 40 kilometers; Alexander Werth, *Russia at War* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1964), p. 876.

[81] George Bruce, *The Warsaw Uprising* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1972), p. 187.

been an extremely difficult and costly enterprise because the attack would have had to proceed under heavy enemy fire, which was hard to suppress. The Western Allies never attempted assaults across rivers in such conditions. Had the Red Army succeeded, it would have saved the Warsaw residents, most of whom were uneasy about the Soviets and many hostile, at the price of thousands soldiers lost during the assault, delay of future major operations, and political tensions caused by the AK's attempts to establish a government that continued to regard Russia as its enemy. No army would have sacrificed thousands of soldiers to save foreign civilians even if they were friendly, and the hostility between Soviet and Polish political leaders sealed the fate of the uprising. The Stavka still authorized the attempt of the 1st Polish Army to cross the Vistula on the night after the Red Army took Praga. The Germans repulsed the attack with a loss of 5,500 Polish soldiers.[82] No further attempts to force the Vistula at Warsaw followed, and the insurgents surrendered to the Germans on 2 October. Polish civilians paid a heavy price: The uprising and German reprisals in its wake cost 150,000 lives of Warsaw residents. The Red Army proceeded to its initial plans. It accumulated forces and supplies, and in January 1945, it attacked from the bridgeheads it had captured in July, cut the communications of the Germans remaining in Warsaw, and took it without a fight. Many Poles, however, blaimed the Red Army for its failure to rescue the uprising. This episode was to poison Polish-Soviet relations for many years to come.

After defeat of the uprising, the Soviets saw no need for restraint. They found an appeal by Bor-Komorowski stating: "The Bolshevik enemy will face the same merciless struggle that shook the German invader. Actions in favor of Russia are treason to the motherland. … The Germans are running. Time is coming to fight the Soviets."[83] This appeal contradicted the policy of the government-in-exile, a fact that the Soviets did not know. They intensified the crackdown on AK, which could not offer strong resistance because the Western Allies would not allow it and because Poles had mixed feelings toward the Soviets. Whatever they thought about Stalinism and the Soviet policy toward the Warsaw uprising, most of them understood that the Red Army played a key role in the Allies' war effort. These factors undermined the potential for anti-Soviet resistance. In November 1944, the government-in-exile ordered guerrillas to stop any armed struggle against the Soviets, and on 19 January 1945, Leopold Okulicki, who succeeded Bor-Komorowski as the AK commander-in-chief, disbanded his armed forces, preserving the underground network in anticipation of a conflict between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union.[84]

[82] Zawodny, *Nothing but Honor,* pp. 210, 211.

[83] Document No. 8 in V. A. Zolotarev and G. N. Sevost'ianov, eds., *Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina,* Vol. 3 (Moscow: Nauka, 1999), p. 462.

[84] Beria to Stalin (28 November 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 68, l. 5; V. S. Parsadanova, "Zarozhdenie pol'skogo dvizheniia soprotivleniia," in V. V. Mar'ina, ed., *Dvizhenie soprotivleniia v stranakh Tsentral'noi i Iugo-Vostochnoi Evropy* (Moscow: RADIKS, 1995), p. 393.

Most, but not all, guerrillas complied with the order, but some AK members and the units of the extreme right continued fighting the Soviets.

The Polish resistance faced special challenges in the disputed territories. AK was popular among the Poles, but Poles alone. The ethnic majorities of the borderlands – Ukrainians, Belorussians, and, to a lesser degree, Lithuanians – all resented the Polish guerrillas and betrayed them to the authorities. AK's support in the countryside was slight because most Poles lived in towns. It was not the Soviets but the UPA that wrecked Polish resistance in western Ukraine. Though the Polish population of western Ukraine exceeded that of western Belorussia, AK resistance there was much weaker in Ukraine than in Belorussia because it spent most of its energy defending Poles from UPA terror and launching retaliation raids against Ukrainian villages instead of fighting Germans or Soviets.

In 1944 and early 1945, the strength of Polish resistance in Lithuania matched that of the Lithuanians, although it was confined to southern regions, where Poles lived. From April to July 1945, Trakai Province, with the second largest proportion of Poles in Lithuania, had more insurgents than any Lithuanian-dominated province.[85] The NKVD estimated that on 1 June 1945, about one-fifth of the rebels operating in Lithuania were Poles. Most of them worked in the urban underground. From 1944 to May 1945, the police arrested 7,721 members of the Polish urban resistance versus 2,039 members of the Lithuanian resistance. However, the statistics on arrests carried out from June to December of 1945 show that AK resistance declined rapidly: The police apprehended 417 Poles versus 2,245 Lithuanians.[86] AK kept its command infrastructure mainly in the cities, where it was vulnerable to police attacks. The NKVD had subsequently liquidated two AK headquarters in Vilnius by June 1945.[87] Having lost its commanders, arrested by the Soviets, and its best fighters, killed during futile uprisings against the Germans, Polish resistance became increasingly fragmented, and it shifted to the right, opposite to the general trend in Polish society. It was virtually extinguished by the fall of 1945. The remnants of the underground vanished with the exchange of populations between Poland and the USSR in 1946.

4.3 Local Civilians as the Primary Victims of Anti-Soviet Resistance

The police files, a reliable source of information on Soviet casualties, demonstrate conclusively that every nationalist resistance killed many more civilians than combatants. The primary activity of the resistance was terror against

[85] Zubrenkov, "*Vooruzhennoe protivodeistvie,*" pp. 188, 189.

[86] Document No. 148 in Gaškaite, *Lietuvos partizanu,* pp. 486, 487; "Spravka o meropriiatiiakh po usileniiu bor'by s banditizmom v Litovskoi SSR [The steps aimed at intensification of the fight against banditry in Lithuania]" (12 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 5.

[87] Beria to Stalin (17 March 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 94, l. 49; "Spravka o meropriiatiiakh po usileniiu bor'by s banditizmom v Litovskoi SSR [The steps aimed at intensification of the fight against banditry in Lithuania]" (12 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 4.

local residents marked as collaborators rather than attacks against the Soviet security forces (Table 4.10).

OUN's definition of collaboration was quite inclusive. N. Slobodiuk, an SB subdistrict commandant who personally executed 12 to 15 persons, testified that his unit received the following order from his superior:

(1) Kill all UPA enemies, that is, all Poles, Czechs, Jews, Komsomol members, Red Army officers, policemen, and all Ukrainians who even slightly sympathize with the Soviet authorities.
(2) Kill all those who evade service in UPA, along with their families . …
(3) Arrest and kill all Soviet soldiers and officers who have escaped German POW camps.
(4) Secure the prompt delivery of food to UPA and apply corporal punishment to those who sabotage the deliveries.[88]

After the Poles and Jews, OUN's primary targets were Russian and east Ukrainian civilians. The government sought to strengthen its base in the western territories, flooding them with petty officials and specialists such as agronomists, technicians, railway workers, and clerks from Russia and eastern Ukraine. OUN regarded them as police agents and killed them.[89] It did not advocate the extermination of Russians in its official publications, but many UPA fighters took its anti-Russian rhetoric as a mandate for action. When M. Kinash, an SB functionary, found a Russian mechanic fixing a truck in a village, he shot the mechanic while the latter was lying under the truck without exchanging a single word. As Kinash explained, "I committed this murder on my own initiative, without any [specific] order because at that time I had [general] orders to kill all Russians."[90] UPA members executed many Russians like this mechanic solely on the basis of ethnicity. Bandera maintained that OUN should fight not just Russian imperialism but the Russian people, and nationalists continued this policy until the end of the resistance. Furthermore, after OUN ordered the cleansing of UPA of "unreliable elements" on 9 June 1944, SB killed non-Ukrainians even among UPA guerrillas.[91] Several captured UPA officers testified that guerrillas killed hundreds of former Soviet soldiers who, after escaping German POW camps, settled quietly in western Ukrainian villages. A UPA training instructor in Rovno Province admitted that in April 1943, his leaders ordered the death of all former POWs in western Ukraine "regardless of their ethnicity because they maintained contacts with the [Red] partisans. As a result of this order, many [former] POWs died. Since we had to

[88] Interrogation of N. F. Slobodiuk (13 March 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 133, ll. 85–89. Interrogation reports of the Soviet police should be treated with caution because they often used "physical methods of coercion" to receive whatever information they needed. However, other primary sources corroborate the data on UPA terror against all these groups except Czechs.

[89] Document No. 4 in Dukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag,* p. 133.

[90] Interrogation of M. M. Kinash (6 August 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 277v.

[91] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* pp. 243, 366, 381.

TABLE 4.10 *Total Deaths Inflicted by Guerrillas during Their Attacks and Soviet Counterinsurgency Operations, 1945–1946*

	1944					1945					1946				
	W.Uk	Lit	Lat	Est	W. Bel	W.Uk	Lit	Lat	Est	W. Bel	W.Uk	Lit	Lat	Est	W. Bel
Police	221	53	No data	0	44	400	138	43	21	67	253	99	21	11	20
NKVD and Red Army soldiers	2,037	92		5	140	948	351	114	40	73	443	181	51	35	11
Militia	40	No data		2	9	368	510	200	39	15	398	243	92	35	10
Soviet activists	904	268		3	58	823	615	152	75	177	347	444	67	48	75
Civilians	2,953	262		57	76	4,249	1,630	262	141	296	1,688	2,037	177	125	135
Total	6,155	675		67	327	6,788	3,244	771	316	628	3,129	3,004	408	254	251

Notes: These data do not include those missing, some of whom were killed by the guerrillas. Data on losses of the Latvian militia for 1945 exclude January. The data on casualties in Lithuania submitted by the police in 1945 (3,244) differ from the final summary it produced in 1953 (4,144). Poliakov to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.709, ll. 22, 31; Leont'ev to Kruglov (2 April 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.279, ll.7–15; GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.319.

spare ammunition, they were strangled with wire." UPA killed 100 such men in the Goshchansky District of Rovno Province alone.[92]

Nationalists treated east Ukrainians barely better than Russians because most of them were pro-Soviet. According to Ivan Pan'kiv, SB officer in Lvov Province, Shukhevych ordered the killing of East Ukrainians "on shaky grounds or without any grounds, and contemplated their total extermination, including even OUN or UPA members."[93] On 15 March 1947, the OUN branch in Stanislav Province issued an order: "All civilians, regardless of ethnicity, who came to western Ukraine from the east in 1939, 1940, 1941, 1944, 1945, 1946, and 1947 must immediately move to the places of their previous residence. Persons disobeying this order and remaining here after 15 April risk losing their lives and property."[94] Extermination of outsiders on general suspicion that they were a hand of Moscow was an important aspect of OUN policy.

Most victims of every nationalist movement, however, were local residents. At the beginning of the Soviet reoccupation, the majority of the local population disliked the new administration, and many sympathized with the guerrillas. In some western Ukrainian regions, entire villages fled to the forests when the Red Army approached them.[95] Il'ia Starinov, deputy head of the Ukrainian Partisan Headquarters, wrote: "I am fighting a fourth war but never met such hostility as in the liberated regions of Ternopol' Province." Another Soviet official found that in Rovno Province, "nationalists seek to have their men in every village, homestead, street and house. I must say, they often succeed in it."[96] However, the attitude of the population to the opponents was far from uniform, and it evolved with time. OUN leaders complained that the western Ukrainian "masses have only national but not revolutionary consciousness. Their mentality is shaped to a very large extent by a slavish understanding of life that focuses too much on personal welfare. Until now only active members fought the enemy, but the masses just apathetically watched."[97] In August

[92] Interrogation of A. A. Iarosh (23 January 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 133, l. 6; Interrogation of N. F. Slobodiuk (13 March 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 133, l. 85; Interrogation of A. V. Hritsiuk (17 April 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 133, l. 102; B. I. Kaptelov, "OUN na sluzhbe u fashizma," *VIZ* 5:51, 1991.

[93] Interrogation of I. G. Pan'kiv (28 October–2 November 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 135, l. 202. See similar reports in Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia,* p. 90; OUN, "Zvit z propagandyvnoi roboty v pershomu raioni [Report about propaganda work in the First District]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1716, l. 2v; Strokach to Korotchenko, "Dokladnaia zapiska ob aktivnykh deistviiakh banderovtsev [Report on banderists' activities]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 928, l. 31; Aleksandr Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag: OUN, UPA i reshenie "evreiskogo voprosa"* (Moscow: Regnum, 2008), p. 82. In 2007, the government of Ukraine posthumously awarded Shukhevych the title "Hero of Ukraine."

[94] Document No. 71 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 344.

[95] Document No. 59 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 2, p. 134.

[96] Documents No. 14 and 47 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 32, 122; Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia,* p. 76.

[97] "Nadraionnym providnykam do vykonannia [Instruction to the supra-district leaders]" (12 November 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1716, l. 6.

1944, immediately after the Red Army had overrun western Ukraine, one OUN regional leader believed that 90 percent of the farmers wished to stay neutral in the conflict between nationalists and the state, whereas another reported: "The masses are disappointed to such a degree that they refuse to give shelter or food even to those [guerrillas] whom they know."[98] OUN summarized its analysis of the peasant attitude: "If we are successful in our struggle, they [people] are quite sympathetic to us and help us. As soon as we suffer defeat and our enemies win a victory, the masses become pessimistic and even hostile if they feel that this would benefit them."[99] Farmers supported the nationalists so long as they believed that guerrillas could protect them and that they had to oppose the Soviet regime only for a short time until a new war began between the USSR and the West. The huge casualties suffered by the resistance at the beginning of the Soviet reoccupation and the Red Army's demobilization in 1945 made many guerrillas and their supporters realize that they could not defeat the Soviets on their own and that foreign liberators would not be coming. With growing disbelief in UPA's victory, peasants became increasingly hostile toward the guerrillas, whose activities provoked security units to raid their villages.

As Kalyvas and Voigt comment, a civil war fortifies some loyalties, weakens others, and evokes new loyalties. This process depends largely on the degree of control that the rival political actors exercise: "Control – regardless of the 'true' preferences of the population – precludes options other than collaboration by creating credible benefits for collaborators and, more importantly, sanctions for defectors."[100] Collaborators began to outnumber guerrillas when the Soviets started exerting a stronger control over the borderlands after the end of the World War II. Most farmers resigned to Soviet authority, and after the government elevated the social status of poor peasants and enforced another agrarian reform in 1944–1945, rural public opinion began shifting against the guerrillas. The number of Communists in western Ukraine grew to 33,165 by 1945 and to 74,993 by 1949.[101] In 1946, the strength of the Ukrainian pro-Soviet militia fluctuated between 33,461 and 63,712 fighters, several times larger than the UPA at that time.[102] By 1946, about 4,500 Lithuanian guerrillas were fighting against 8,216 Lithuanian militiamen and 5,068 members of neighborhood watch groups enlisted by the Soviets.[103] By 1947, the Estonian

[98] "Haidamaka" (10 August 1944), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 70, l. 58, "Klim," "Informatyvnyi zvit z bil'shovits'koi diinosti [Report of the Bolsheviks' actions]" (30 August 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 926, l. 54.

[99] Document No. 148 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 2, p. 303.

[100] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War,* pp. 79, 145.

[101] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* pp. 234, 348.

[102] Strokach to Kruglov, "Ob istrebitel'nykh batal'onakh [Destruction battalions]" (8 May 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 52; Deputy MVD Minister V. Riasnoi to Strokach (31 December 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 523, l. 18.

[103] Lieutenant-Colonel Burylin, head of the BB Section of the Lithuanian NKVD, "Dokladnaia zapiska o sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Report on the condition and

militia had 6,888 men under arms, and the Latvian militia had 14,252; in both cases, they greatly outnumbered the remaining guerrillas.[104] This general trend stemmed from Soviet populist policies, disbelief in victory over the regime, opportunism, and guerrilla brutality toward peasants cooperating with the authorities.

After nationalist guerrillas dispersed their large bands into sections, they were rarely able to attack even small military units. Consequently, their strategic objective changed from fighting security forces to paralyzing the Soviet rural administration until the West intervened. The administrative nucleus was the village council, and the basic law enforcement agency was a police station: These were supposed to be the primary targets of the resistance. However, policemen and administrators were armed and always on the alert, usually guarded by a local militia platoon, all knowing they could expect no mercy if overwhelmed. Guerrillas rarely could assemble forces large enough to defeat them. Such attacks required painstaking preparation; they were often repulsed with heavy losses and cost precious ammunition, which the guerrillas could not replenish. It seemed easier to destroy the authority of the administration by isolating it from the population. Most resistance groups believed that this could be done by intimidating farmers to keep them from cooperating with the state. Although guerrillas devoted much effort to attacks against rural administrators, their major victims were still the soft targets, the peasants who fit their definition of collaborator.

No government can maintain its authority without collaboration, which is inevitable, whether civilians like it or not. The Soviet state could enforce its regulations in any region if it believed this enforcement was worth the effort. The insurgents could not prevent it. Since punishment for resistance seemed certain, the requisitions that guerrillas made on civilians came on top of the government's taxes and duties, and only a minority shared the insurgent agenda, so some farmers cooperated with the government against the rebels. The punishment of collaborators is integral to guerrilla warfare: By killing a few active collaborators, insurgents may deter opportunists from supporting the government. Conversely, they commit a deadly error by treating all cooperation of civilians with the authorities as collaboration.

SB killed peasants, other West Ukrainian civilians, and UPA fighters on the slightest suspicion of treason. The blacklisting guidelines were loose: As OUN claimed, "All those who work for the Soviet government – from the top 'people's commissars' to the lowest janitors … and village foremen – all must be NKVD agents. Their direct duties are merely secondary."[105] The OUN counterintelligence manual, entitled, "For Greater Revolutionary

actions of destruction battalions]" (15 January 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 345; Gaškaite-Žemaitiene, "The Partisan War in Lithuania," p. 34.

[104] Poliakov to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 709, ll. 36, 42.

[105] Document No. 3 in Jeffrey Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura* (Moscow: Sovremennaia Istoriia, 2006), p. 239.

Vigilance," displayed a paranoid mentality similar to that of the NKVD during the Great Terror: It labeled as enemy agents insurgents who had panicked in battle or questioned the possibility of victory and peasants who had failed to deliver food supplies or delayed them or brought tainted food.[106] Following these inclusive blacklisting criteria, SB killed hundreds of people who had no connection to the police. Danylo Szumuk, an OUN lecturer on politics, wrote about SB: "These people are terrible, they are worse than the *Cheka* or the *Gestapo*." OUN regional commandant "Ptashka" warned his superiors: "There were horrible incidents in our region: SB local units shot people indiscriminately [*na pravo i na livo*]. … Dark souls wander around and do their dirty business. … There is no point in doing political work in areas … where SB perpetrates such violence."[107] Iurii Stel'mashchuk, commander of the UPA *Zavykhost* region, testified that OUN's central *provod* ordered SB "to exterminate entire families suspected in anti-OUN sentiments, including toddlers, women and seniors."[108]OUN officially legitimized torture as a method of investigation,[109] and SB routinely employed gruesome interrogation techniques, such as shoving burning wood into the bodies of suspected informants. Naturally, most interrogated suspects confessed and were promptly executed along with their families. Between January and March 1945, SB killed 889 OUN members of the 938 it investigated in the Northwest OUN region alone.[110]

A converted SB functionary testified that his unit had tortured a UPA liaison girl, suspected of treason, by hanging her by her feet and employing water boarding to extract a confession. Although the girl repudiated it when the torture was over, she was executed, as was her brother, the guerrilla "Rybak." Nobody questioned his loyalty, but SB worried that he would attempt to rescue his sister. Another liaison girl withstood all tortures, but the SB killed her anyway because she looked so awful after the interrogation that, had she been released, SB methods would have caused uproar among farmers.[111] Many loyal fighters deserted because they worried they might become victims of the purge.

UPA's broad definition of collaboration embraced too many people to make terror purposeful. Several OUN leaders, including Kliachkivs'kyi, ordered the extermination of all Soviet sympathizers,[112] and local commanders often regarded peasants ignoring UPA instructions or those reluctantly complying

[106] Document No. 3 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* pp. 258, 259, 262, 267.

[107] Wiktor Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth* (Toronto, Canada: Wiktor Poliszczuk, 1999), p. 290; Document No. 210 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 2, pp. 441, 442.

[108] Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag,* p. 82.

[109] Document No. 2 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* p. 238.

[110] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* pp. 317, 319.

[111] Agent "Sokol" (17 July 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1697, ll. 195–197.

[112] Interrogation of I. N. Tkachuk (18 and 23 June 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 134, l. 140; Interrogation of V. E. Stupak (20 November and 20 December 1944), PC, box 76, f. R-30, op. 2, l. 11; Interrogation of N. F. Slobodiuk (13 March 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 133, ll. 85–89.

with government directives as such and killed them. When OUN announced conscription to UPA, it found that "peasants have already got enough of the military fun, and they have to be dragged by force, and even punished."[113] When the hopes for Western intervention faded, many conscripts and those who had joined the guerrillas while hiding from the Red Army draft accepted government amnesties and returned home. Realizing that amnesties were a deadly threat to resistance, the guerrillas hunted down deserters, who had no choice but to collaborate with the authorities.

While conscripting peasants, OUN forbade them to report for mobilization to the Red Army, which Soviet authorities also treated as a grave offense entailing a severe penalty. In a letter intercepted by the police, "Motsnyi," a UPA commander in Lvov Province, ordered his men: "Explain to people that those who voluntarily join the Red Army are traitors to Ukraine and the revolution. Demand from SB that it mercilessly punish the families of those who have joined the army." Kliachkivs'kyi also endorsed this policy.[114] The Rovno Military Enlistment Office reported:

> On 7 February 1945, the draft dodger Shevchuk ... came to the District Military Enlistment Office. He was sent home, to Korostianin Village, where his family lived, in order to get some food. During the night of 8 February, Banderists attacked his house, killed Shevchuk and his family, in total eight persons, and chalked on the entrance doors: "Those who report to the Military Enlistment Office voluntarily and comply with the orders of the Soviet authorities will suffer the same fate."[115]

In Pesochnoe Village, Volhynia, UPA shot eight boys and hanged four girls, from 15 to 17 years of age, whose fathers had reported for mobilization to the Red Army.[116] Such an attitude forced the relatives of men drafted to the Red Army and demobilized soldiers whose families had suffered at the hands of UPA to join the Soviet militia. The families of Soviet soldiers outnumbered the families of guerrillas, and OUN terror against them multiplied the number of Soviet supporters in western Ukraine.

The list of deeds that the UPA regarded as treason was endless. It conducted its requisitions in a more orderly manner than did the Red partisans and punished its fighters for plunder more severely, yet, according to OUN-M, the food tax set by OUN-B was two or three times higher than that of the

[113] Document No. 209 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 2, p. 438.

[114] I. Bogorodchenko, head of the Organizer and Instructor Section of Lvov Provincial Party Committee, to Zlenko, "Ob aktivizatsii ukrainsko-nemetskikh natsionalistov v L'vovskoi oblasti [Intensification of the activities of the Ukrainian-German nationalists in the Lvov Province]" (16 April 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 185; Document No. 2 in Diukov, *Vtorostepennyi vrag,* pp. 127, 128. See similar reports in Document No. 68 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 150; Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 77, 129, 157, 158.

[115] N. D. Plotnikov, ed., "Smertonostsy," *VIZ* 3:59, 1991.

[116] Lieutenant-Colonel Rusakov to Mil'shtein (20 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 362, l. 275.

Germans or the Soviets.[117] The UPA threatened to kill those who failed to pay it.[118] It also sought, in its own words, "to provoke discontent and famine in towns." The UPA warned peasants: "If any one of you carries grain to the [procurement] stations, then we will kill you like a dog, and your whole family will be hanged or cut to pieces."[119] UPA officers wrote reports about the hanging of children by their units.[120] In June 1948, the police discovered a pile of human legs belonging to 17 Ukrainian women and a boy. It could identify only a few of the remains. SB had executed them because two women had brothers in the Red Army, one sold milk to policemen, and another "promptly fulfilled all obligations to the state."[121] Sometimes the UPA applied collective punishment to Ukrainian villages. OUN functionary Robert wrote about reprisals against Nevochany Village in Galicia: "This area is pro-Communist. … Local Communists help the Reds to kill our activists. … I ordered … that the entire village be burned down … and suspicious elements shot."[122]

As Mikhail Koval' observes, the UPA's philosophy corresponded to the principle "we won't shy away from staying in blood up to our knees to win freedom for Ukraine [*Khai by krovi po kolina, aby vil'na Ukraina*]."[123] Shukhevych reportedly stated: "Not a single village should recognize Soviet authority. OUN should destroy all those who recognize Soviet authority. Not intimidate but destroy. We should not be concerned that people might damn us for brutality. Nothing horrible would happen if only half of the 40 million Ukrainians survived" but Ukraine gained independence.[124] OUN-M claimed that OUN-B's policy resulted in "hundreds of villages burned down and thousands of Ukrainian men, women and children shot, tortured to death, hanged or strangled. … These satanic

[117] OUN-M, "*Obvynuvachuemo!* [We accuse!]" (February 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 927, l. 140. OUN-M might have exaggerated the amount of the food tax set by OUN-B, but Borovets also mentions that UPA imposed "very high taxes" on the local population; Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy,* p. 255.

[118] "Dekadnaia svodka nr. 9 [Ten-day report no. 9]" (30 April 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 130, l. 131v; Savchenko to Kobulov (4 May 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 130, l. 197; Grushetskii to Khrushchev, "O vypolnenii reshenia TsK KP(b)U [Implementation of the directive of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (9 August 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 247; Kompanets to Khrushchev, "O diversionno-terroristicheskoi deiatel'nosti organizatsii OUN i UPA [Sabotage and terrorist actions of OUN and UPA]" (5 November 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 929, ll. 65–67.

[119] UPA (June 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 145, l. 371; Jeffrey Burds, "*Agentura*: Soviet Informants' Network in Galicia, 1944–1948," *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 11(1):109, 1997.

[120] "Bodak" (28 January 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1606, l. 5.

[121] Document No. 68 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 152; Jeffrey Burds, "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944–1948," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 42(2–4):308, 2001.

[122] Document No. 40 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 397.

[123] Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii i Velykii Vitchyznianii viinakh,* p. 51.

[124] V. I. Klokov, "Dve tendentsii v osveshchenii partizanskoi bor'by v tylu nemetsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov," in M. V. Koval', ed., *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii viini* (Kyïv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny, 1995), p. 140. I was unable to independently verify this quotation.

activities were carried out under the banner of the Ukrainian revolution. … Such is [the nature of] the Bandera movement." UPA's "terror in Volhynia exceeded [the terror conducted] by the Bolsheviks or the Germans."[125]

Resistance movements elsewhere had no such brutal security service as SB, but they also attacked mainly civilians. The Latvian Partisan Union for the Defense of the Motherland demanded that two Soviet activists be executed for every member of the resistance killed by the Soviets.[126] A Lithuanian resistance group warned peasants that those paying the food tax would be "regarded as traitors of the nation and suffer severe punishment."[127] Lithuanian guerrillas realized that the government was gaining increasing support owing to agrarian reform and targeted its beneficiaries, sometimes killing them along with their families in violation of official policy, as this police report shows:

> On 4 August [1945], two LLA bands with a total strength of 90 to 100 men led by former Chief of District Police Jonas Dambrauskas and the kulak Kazys Ramanauskas, whose families were deported in July 1945, attacked 31 families in Alytus Province. They killed 48 persons and kidnapped 2. Among the killed were 11 persons from 60 to 70 years old, 7 children from 7 to 14 years old and 6 girls from 17 to 20 years old. All victims were poor farmers who had received land [confiscated] from kulaks. … None of the killed worked for party or other administrative agencies.[128]

The police maintained separate statistics on casualties suffered in operations initiated by the security forces and attacks of the guerrillas. The latter data reveal the targets of the resistance. Deaths of police and soldiers made up only 8 percent of the total in Lithuania and 10.9 percent in western Ukraine during 1945 and 3.9 percent and 13.5 percent, respectively, during 1946. In Estonia, the casualties of the police and soldiers constituted 10.9 percent of the total between 1944 and 1953. The rest were local residents, including militiamen, local officials, activists, and other peasants, some of whom were police informers (Table 4.11).

When collectivization began in the borderlands during 1948–1949, the guerrillas robbed *kolkhozes,* destroyed their tractors, burned crops, and killed cattle. People were herded to *kolkhozes* against their wishes, but destruction of collective property did not solve the problem; it merely deprived farmers of a means of subsistence. OUN member Dmytro Pavlychko admitted later: "Chaps with submachine guns coming from the forest too brutally fought other chaps, who had joined the collective farms under pressure and had become Soviet activists. The war waged by SB against such activists was our grave mistake."[129] Misiunas and Taagepera write about the Baltic resistance:

[125] OUN-M, "Obvynuvachuemo!" pp. 138, 140. On OUN-B burning Ukrainian villages and mass executions of their residents, see Document No. 40 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 397.

[126] Swain, "Divided We Fall," p. 200.

[127] Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), p. 242.

[128] Beria to Stalin (September 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 354, l. 45.

[129] Koval', *Ukraïna u druhii svitovii i Velykii Vitchyznianii viinakh,* p. 51.

TABLE 4.11 *Total Deaths Inflicted by Attacks of the Lithuanian, Ukrainian, and Estonian Nationalists*

	1945				1946				1944–1953	
	Lithuania		Western Ukraine		Lithuania		Western Ukraine		Estonia	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Police	85	3.2	279	4.8	67	2.5	190	7.0	51	5.8
NKVD and Red Army officers and soldiers	129	4.8	353	6.1	38	1.4	177	6.5	45	5.1
Militia	254	9.5	113	2.0	165	6.0	344	12.6	294	33.1
Soviet activists	575	22.0	785	13.6	432	15.8	335	12.3		
Civilians	1,630	61	4,249	73.5	2,029	74.3	1,677	61.6	497	56.0
Total	2,673	100	5,779	100	2,731	100	2,723	100	887	100

Source: Poliakov to Kruglov, "Nashi poteri pri bandproiavleniiakh [Our Casualties from Band it Attacks]" (24 January 1947), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.709, l. 5, 10, 22, 31; GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.319; Document Nr.8 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy*, 289, pp. 290.

... as the years went by, it became indistinguishable from social obstructionism. ... As more people collaborated, more became targets of guerrilla counterterror, with the result that victims' families became more pro-Soviet. ... Increasingly reduced to struggling for their personal subsistence, the Freedom Fighters started to fit the "bandit" label the occupation forces tried to pin on them.[130]

The Soviet regime had few enthusiastic supporters in the western borderlands, but when forced to choose sides by guerrilla terror and government retaliations, peasants increasingly sided with the stronger opponent, the state, so as to break the vicious circle of violence and chaos. Facing the growing hostility of farmers tired of guerrilla warfare and counterinsurgency operations, organized resistance ceased before 1950. The insurgency in Estonia exhausted its potential in 1946 and in Latvia a year later, although collectivization slightly reinforced and reinvigorated the remnants of guerrillas in 1949–1950.[131] After that, the resistance declined rapidly. Most scattered insurgents merely hid in the borderland forests, but police continued to track them down well into the 1950s (Tables 4.12 and 4.13).

At the end of 1949, the UPA issued an order to terminate guerrilla actions, and in March 1950, a commando unit led by police veteran Pavel Sudoplatov ambushed and shot dead Shukhevych. By 1952, only two members of the central *provod* remained in western Ukraine: Vasyl' Kuk, who had replaced Shukhevych as the UPA commander-in-chief, and Vasyl' Halasa, commander of UPA-North. On 11 July 1953, the police caught Halasa, and on 23 May 1954, it apprehended Kuk.[132] By that time, armed resistance had expired. The Lithuanian nationalists ended their armed struggle in 1952. In May 1953, police arrested Jonas Žemaitis, chair of the presidium of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement; in the next year, he was executed. The last Lithuanian resistance leader, Adolfas Ramanauskas, was apprehended in 1956 and executed in 1957.[133]

In 1956–1958, the government amnestied the deported families of nationalists and most guerrillas who were serving prison terms. Some of them, a minority, preserved devotion to the cause unbroken by years in Siberian camps; they were surprised that nationalist appeals found no response among those who used to sympathize with the rebels. The police routinely intercepted the correspondence of former guerrillas. The latter complained that there was "treason everywhere"; the authorities produced "'Janissaries' with whom no communication is possible." Ivan Iaremiv, an OUN member in Rovno Province, wrote to his exiled friend: "Had you seen people here, you would not believe that such changes are possible. ... They [villagers] treat us as if we are monsters. ... Once [they] even attacked me with a knife – you,

[130] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* pp. 92, 93.
[131] Document No. 8 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy,* pp. 292–295; Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 195.
[132] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* pp. 377, 390.
[133] Gaškaite-Žemaitiene, "The Partisan War in Lithuania," p. 43.

TABLE 4.12 *Dynamics of the Lithuanian Resistance: Casualties of the Guerrillas and Their Opponents*

	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	Total
Guerrillas killed	2,436	9,777	2,143	1,540	1,135	1,192	635	590	457	188	20,093
Guerrillas, fugitives and underground members arrested	4,162	19,973	10,760	6,416	4,481	4,699	3,407	3,396	1,131	951	59,376
Security forces and civilians killed	675	4,144	3,004	2,781	1,791	1,116	544	316	127	19	14,517

Source: Document Nr.4.3 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 2, pp. 77, 78. This final summary differs from the data compiled by the police on an annual basis, especially in the number of arrested persons, because some reports counted all the detainees, while other counted only those who were prosecuted.

TABLE 4.13 *Dynamics of the Estonian Resistance: Casualties of the Guerrillas and Their Opponents*

	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	Total
Guerrillas killed	9	565	244	76	74	166	145	91	73	52	1,495
Guerrillas, underground members and their accomplices arrested	209	4,409	976	273	568	634	836	513	148	142	8,708
Police and Red Army soldiers killed	0	61	48	7	17	19	13	16	4	3	188
Militia and activists killed	5	80	85	29	22	59	28	11	4	1	324
Other civilians killed by guerrillas	57	142	134	42	39	46	23	9	5	0	497

Source: Document Nr.8 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy*, p. 292. See comment in the previous note.

bandit, go away!"[134] Totalitarian regimes have a remarkable capacity for converting people to their cause. In the mid-1950s, many of the borderland residents became Soviet loyalists, whereas the rest sought to maintain good relations with the authorities even if they disliked them.

Conclusion

A culture of armed struggle against authority had emerged in the borderlands during the war, and the underground networks were much better entrenched in 1944 than they had been in 1939–1941. Even in regions where nationalist leaders pressed peasants to enlist, their forces included many volunteers who fought courageously against heavy odds and without external assistance. The resistance was anti-Communist, but this does not necessarily mean that nationalism was the major motivation of most guerrillas. Only a minority of the insurgent rank and file fully shared the ideals of their leaders. The largest components of the resistance were farmers hurt by Soviet agrarian policy; young men evading the draft; those believing that their collaboration with the Germans, participation in the resistance of 1941, or social or professional background left them no other option but to fight the Soviet regime; and in western Ukraine, conscripts.

Some underground networks were centralized; others had only embryonic organization. The centralized movements with strong political leadership, such as OUN-B and AK, had a coherent strategy, a sophisticated infrastructure, and control over their forces. The strategy of the Lithuanian resistance was less articulated, whereas the Latvian and Estonian "forest brothers" had no clear objectives and were too fragmented to be efficient. Whether centralized or decentralized networks had a better survival rate is hard to say, but centralization did not guarantee an optimal strategy. None of the resistance movements could succeed without foreign intervention. The hope that Germany or the Western Allies would help them attain their goals became the cornerstone of their strategy. This ethnocentric interpretation of the international situation led to wishful thinking and strategic misconceptions. In 1941, nationalist leaders threw young patriots, idealists, and peasants, defending their right to live as they chose, to struggle for German objectives incompatible with their own, and in 1944, they rallied hundreds of thousands in a hopeless fight against the Soviet state. Some of those who opposed the regime would have become its victims whatever their deeds, but they were a minority. Most resistance fighters were uneducated farmers who did not realize, at least until the summer of 1945, that their goals were unattainable. Only AK showed political responsibility, abandoning armed struggle as soon as its leaders found no foreign help forthcoming. The rest continued to rally as many people as they could, and some killed those who refused to join them.

[134] Document No. 119 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7, pp. 541–543.

A major nationalist mistake was to attribute their own sentiments to their entire ethnic group. However, only a small minority of Ukrainians supported OUN, most Poles sympathized with AK but few wished to fight the Soviets, Estonians and Latvians thought resistance foolish in that international situation, and agrarian reform won some Lithuanians to the side of the state. A great gap stands between sympathy for rebels and joining them. Farmers are more pragmatic than urban middle-class dissidents: they rarely fight for abstract ideals and join guerrillas only if the authorities make their existence so miserable that the dangerous life of a guerrilla offers a better chance for survival. If a regime's pressure is bearable, and especially if it supplements sticks with carrots, it usually has some legitimacy in the eyes of the rural community. At the beginning of the Soviet reoccupation, most politically active residents of the western provinces – a minority of the rural population – supported the nationalist resistance, believing it would protect them from oppressive authorities for a short time until the Western Allies terminated Soviet occupation. After this hope had faded, Soviet populist policies had attracted previously passive social strata to the new administration, and the resistance had ruined its reputation with atrocities, an increasingly large part of the population sided with the government. The guerrillas could not prevent punitive police actions. On the contrary, repressions were harshest in western Ukraine and Lithuania precisely because opposition was the strongest. Nor could the guerrillas avert or postpone collectivization that was launched first in western Ukraine and then simultaneously in all Baltic republics, and it proceeded faster there than in Belorussia, where virtually no native resistance occurred. Each major nationalist group slaughtered or helped the Nazis slaughter far more members of ethnic minorities and local peasants than they killed Soviet soldiers. These insurgents kept the Soviet rural administration at bay for several years, but at so high a price for civilians that most people opted for law and order under any authority.

5

Soviet Agrarian Policy as a Pacification Tool

> The agrarian reform was a spearhead of the Rebel Army.[1]
>
> – Ernesto Guevara

The Soviet counterinsurgency doctrine has never been articulated as a counterinsurgency manual, yet Politburo members knew how the Bolsheviks had won the civil war. Facing a nationalist challenge in the borderlands, the Soviet regime responded with a set of political, military, and security measures it had developed during the civil war. Its stick-and-carrot strategy presumed a combination of populist reforms intended to win the hearts of the poorer majority, harsh punitive policies designed to eliminate all actual and potential opponents, and amnesties that would allow all proletarians and their class allies who accidentally found themselves among the Soviet enemies to switch sides. The Soviet leaders viewed insurgency as an inevitable class conflict; therefore, it was vital to involve the borderland poor in the struggle against the resistance, organize them politically and militarily by appointing them to local administrative positions and by raising peasant militia, and lead them against the enemies of the proletarian state. This class struggle was to culminate in a social revolution controlled and directed by the state. Agrarian reform was the major political means with which to instigate a class conflict that would end with the destruction of the resistance by the joint force of the state security agencies, the proletariat, and its allies – peasants. The theory of class conflict, however, was always ambivalent with regard to the peasantry. The Stalinists believed that they had developed the only correct agrarian strategy for a state with a predominantly peasant population. It presumed three stages: (1) a radical agrarian reform that would secure popular support during the power struggle, (2) a brief period of market economy, needed for consolidation of Communist authority, and (3) collectivization. This chapter assesses the impact of the Soviet agrarian policy in the borderlands on farmers'

[1] Ernesto Guevara, "Social Projections of the Rebel Army," in Jay Mallin, ed., *"Che" Guevara on Revolution* (Coral Cables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1969), p. 75.

attitude toward the Soviet administration. Some aspects of the Communist rural strategy effectively advanced the government's political objectives, but others provoked peasant resistance.

After the Soviet Union incorporated the western regions in 1939–1940, its leaders faced a situation like that of the Bolsheviks in 1917: They urgently needed to win some support among the majority of the borderland populations – the farmers, who were indifferent or hostile to Communist ideology and would back the new authorities only out of self-interest. The social problems in the western regions differed from those of Russia on the eve of the Revolution, but Communists still applied to the new territories the agrarian strategy they had developed in 1917–1929. They immediately launched radical agrarian reform intended to split the hostile rural society along class lines into a majority of winners – poor peasants and agricultural laborers – and a minority of losers – *kulaks,* landlords, and the church. The rural administrators were to unleash and monitor a social revolution in the countryside. However, Soviet leaders expected that the reform would quickly acquire its own impetus, being driven by "the initiative of the masses." The government proclaimed that it sought to reduce economic stratification and to raise poor farms to middle size, making them large enough to support a family without sharecropping and to provide a surplus of agricultural products for mandatory delivery to the state and for trade on the free market, but not so large that the family would have to hire additional labor. In the Baltic region, the target was 10 hectares in Latvia and Lithuania and 12 in Estonia. The government established the landholding limit as 30 hectares, confiscated lands above the limit from the wealthier farms and all lands of landlords and the church, and gave these lands free of charge to *bedniaks* and agricultural laborers "in perpetual tenure." In addition, the state gave poor farmers loans to purchase horses, cows, agricultural equipment, seeds, and fertilizers.[2] In western Ukraine, the landholding limit varied from 7 to 15 hectares. Polish war veterans lost their property, which was distributed among *bedniaks* and agricultural laborers. The government donated 84,000 horses and 76,000 head of cattle to western Ukrainians and 33,400 cows to western Belorussians. It also gave loans to Baltic peasants to purchase 37,700 cows in Latvia, 18,905 in Lithuania, and 18,500 in Estonia.[3]

[2] "Spravka o nekotorykh sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh izmeneniiakh v krestianskikh khoziaistvakh Litovskoi SSR [Information about some socioeconomic changes among Lithuanian farmer households]" (August 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 27, ll. 6, 7. In Lithuania, religious beliefs were so strong that the government found it necessary to let each parish retain 3 hectares; M. A. Rutkovskii, "Sovetskiie agrarnye reformy 1940–41 godov v baltiiskikh respublikakh," *Rossiiskii istoricheskii zhurnal* 1:27, 1997.

[3] "Voprosy sel'skogo khoziaistva [Agricultural matters]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 10, l. 91; David R. Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s* (Edmonton, Canada: University of Alberta Press, 1992), pp. 29, 30; Document No. 35 in Hilda Sabbo, ed., *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 3 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 233.

Since the farmers in most of the new territories had never lived in peasant communes and had no egalitarian sentiments, the reforms of 1939–1940, unlike the Decree on Land of 1917, did not pursue perfect equality. The wealthy farmers lost land above the limit but preserved the rest of their property. Although the poorest farms received additional allotments, there were so many agricultural laborers and so few resources that the government could not reach the proclaimed targets for the average farm. The proportion of the poorest farms (less than 5 hectares) dropped from 27.4 to 17.2 percent in Lithuania, yet 57.2 percent of Lithuanian farms still held less than 10 hectares after the reform.[4]

In Estonia, where the interwar agrarian reform was more effective than elsewhere, the government created 56,200 new farms during the 19 years between 1919 and 1938; however, peasants who received the land had mortgages to pay for many years to come. The Soviet reform produced 24,755 new farms in Estonia and gave additional land to 27,609 farms by December 1940, four months after the annexation of Estonia, and these peasants received their land for free. In Latvia, the Soviet reform created 52,000 new farms, and 23,000 small farms increased their acreage within the same period.[5] In addition, the Soviet government canceled the debts peasants owed to former governments: It wrote off all the debts of peasants who had less than 5 hectares of land; and it cut by 50 percent the debts of those who owned between 5 and 10 hectares, and by 25 percent the debts of those who owned between 10 and to 15 hectares.[6] Many farmers were impressed with the speed and scale of the Soviet reform. *Bedniaks* enthusiastically accepted the land taken from their neighbors. Estonian farmers filed 103,560, Latvians 156,044, and Lithuanians 261,172 applications for allotments. Before the Soviet reform, there were 139,991 farms in Estonia, about 235,000 in Latvia, and 354,854 in Lithuania.[7] In all these regions, therefore, most peasants applied for an increase of their lots. Many asked the authorities to confiscate more land from their neighbors than Soviet laws allowed. The reform thus exacerbated agrarian tensions in regions where they had been moderate and were unlikely to reach the boiling

[4] B. Baranauskas, head of the Agrarian Section of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist Party, "Spravka o zemlepol'zovanii v Litve [Information about land use in Lithuania]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 10, l. 16.

[5] Documents No. 8 and 46 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 3, pp. 199, 275; Hendrik Allik, People's Commissar of Agriculture of Estonia, "Kratkii otchet o rabote narkomata zemledeliia ESSR [Brief report of the Estonian People's Commissariat of Agriculture]" (22 January 1946), RGASPI, f. 598, op. 1, d. 3, l. 62; Elmars Pelakus, ed., *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia* (Riga: Nordik, 1999), p. 339.

[6] "Voprosy sel'skogo khoziaistva" [Agricultural matters] (23 October 1940), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 563, l. 127.

[7] Rutkovskii, "Sovetskiie agrarnye reformy," pp. 29, 30; Mitriushkin, "O rukovodstve Latviiskoi partiinoi organizatsii sel'skim khoziaistvom [Management of agriculture by the Latvian party organization]" (24 January 1947), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 23, l. 71; Baranauskas, "Spravka o zemlepol'zovanii v Litve," l. 16; Toivo Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1991), p. 128.

point without outside intervention. Estonian author Juhan Smuul, who witnessed the social impact of the reform, testified: "The countryside was split between the [old land] owners and the new settlers. The idea of national unity that we had been taught to cherish since childhood went to hell. At meetings bursting with tension, Estonians swore at Estonians furiously, earnestly, with frenzied passion."[8]

Many farmers supported the land reform, but collectivization was universally hated. Peasants knew that collectivization had triggered repressions all over the Soviet Union and provoked a famine in 1932–1933 in eastern Ukraine, and they dreaded it. However, the Ukrainian and Belorussian party leaders who had enforced collectivization in the old territories believed that they could start it in the new provinces within a year. Although they maintained the usual rhetoric about voluntary enlistment in the collective farms and half-heartedly criticized officials who compelled peasants to join them, by June 1941, they had herded 12.8 percent of the western Ukrainian and 6.7 percent of the western Belorussian households into the *kolkhozes*.[9] The collectivization did not provoke mass uprisings, but it did determine the attitude of peasants after the German attack. In western Ukraine, they were predominantly anti-Soviet.

The new Baltic administrations, in contrast, made no attempt to begin collectivization, understanding that it would destroy political gains made by agrarian reform. Between 22 and 23 July 1940, six weeks after the three Baltic states had been occupied by the Red Army but before they were officially incorporated into the Soviet Union, their governments proclaimed land "the property of the whole nation, i.e., state property."[10] However, all three Baltic parliaments issued an identical declaration as a warning to overzealous Communists: "Any attempt to infringe upon the personal property of the peasants or to impose on them collective farms against their wish shall be severely punished as harmful to the interests of the people and the state."[11]

Baltic leaders maintained that Soviet-style collectivization was impossible in their republics because it was economically unjustified and incompatible with local cultural values. In internal discussions, they argued that collectivization might become possible in the remote future but strictly on a voluntary basis. The central government agreed not to rush it as long as the Communist grip on power was weak, but it believed that Soviet experience showed that the Communist state could quickly change traditional culture. It ordered the Baltic leaders to organize a small number of *kolkhozes* as a first step toward collectivization.[12] The party functionaries sent from the center began to spread propaganda promoting collective production. Some local officials sensed the

[8] Rutkovskii, "Sovetskiie agrarnye reformy," p. 25.
[9] Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine,* pp. 35, 37.
[10] Rutkovskii, "Sovetskiie agrarnye reformy," p. 23.
[11] Ibid., p. 24.
[12] Document No. 35 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 3, p. 235.

direction of the wind and attempted to force farmers into *kolkhozes*. Since the republican governments discouraged such pressure, this initiative rarely succeeded, but it did fuel rumors of imminent collectivization. By June 1941, 1 collective farm had emerged in Latvia, 9 in Estonia, and 12 in Lithuania, mainly in regions with Slavic populations. In addition, 34 state farms were established in Latvia, 51 in Lithuania, and 131 in Estonia, with laborers hired on a voluntary basis.[13] Collective farms (*kolkhoz*) were based on fused peasant property. Collective farmers received wages and the part of their products that remained after they had paid taxes in kind to the state, which they then could sell on the market. Subsequently, their welfare depended on the harvest and the taxes set by the state. The state farms (*sovkhoz*) were based on state property. They hired workers and paid them steady – usually low – wages independent of the annual output.

Farmers in the western regions suspected that collectivization was the Soviet goal. This undermined the Soviet struggle for hearts and minds. Other components of Soviet agrarian policy, too, were resented. Striving to compensate for the decline in output caused by farm fragmentation, the government imposed a tax system that, Khrushchev admitted later, "assessed not actual crops but what could have been theoretically grown and squeezed from people for the state's granaries."[14] These taxes were much higher than previous ones and discriminated against prosperous peasants. In Lithuania, a farmer with an annual income of 10,000 rubles had to pay nine times more than the one with 2,000 rubles.[15] Peasants never paid these taxes because the German invasion preempted collection, but the statement of intent alone produced enemies.

To what extent did the prewar agrarian reforms attain the intended goal? They did exacerbate social tensions, polarizing the rural community. However, the government gained only lukewarm support that varied by region and depended on the ratio between the benefits provided by agrarian reform and the resentments caused by other policies. Although the agrarian reform attracted many peasants, the menace of collectivization reduced the number of those who saw themselves as winners and provoked a stronger resistance among wealthier than among poorer farmers. It is hard to quantify the support to the authorities in the borderland countryside by the end of the first Soviet occupation, but where this support did exist, it was mainly *bedniaks* and agricultural laborers who backed the Soviets. The poorer *seredniaks* also received land parcels but smaller than *bedniaks,* whereas the better-off

[13] Janis Kalnberziņš, first secretary of the Latvian Communist party (10 January 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 70, l. 7; Grakauskas, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 10, l. 117; Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States* (London: Hurst & Co, 1993), p. 36; Document No. 48 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 3, p. 277.

[14] N. S. Khrushchev, *Vremia, liudi, vlast',* Vol. 2 (Moscow: Moskovskie novosti, 1999), p. 8.

[15] M. A. Rutkovskii, "Sovetskiie agrarnye reformy 1940–1941 godov v baltiiskikh respublikakh," *Rossiiskii istoricheskii zhurnal* 2:25, 1997; Pranas Zunde, "Lithuania's Economy," in V. Stanley Vardys, ed., *Lithuania under the Soviets* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 143.

ones received nothing but were hit by progressive taxation, and most of them resented the Communists.

Nonetheless, agrarian reform did contribute to the shift in public opinion in favor of the Soviets during the Nazi occupation. Farmers who lost land given to them by the Soviet government realized that they could get it back only if the Soviets won the war. Red partisans reported from Latvia: "New settlers who had received land from us, poor farmers and those who had avoided our [land] confiscations treat us best of all."[16] When the Ukrainian Uniate Church attempted to recover its land, which had been given to peasants by the Communists, the peasants refused, reasoning that "land belongs to the poor, as the Bolsheviks say – to those who cultivate it." The priests who still demanded restoration of their property suffered "inhumane persecution, like it was during the Bolshevik invasion," at the hands of the peasants, and the clergy had to abandon the project.[17] In August 1943, Kliachkivs'kyi attempted to alleviate agrarian tensions within the West Ukrainian community and foster national unity by ordering the distribution of lands belonging to collective farms and to Poles killed or expelled by the *Ukrains'ka Povstans'ka Armiia* (UPA).[18] However, this belated measure remained fruitless because even the few peasants who received land from the nationalists were unable to farm it before the Red Army overran their regions.

After the Soviets returned to the borderlands in 1944, the government rushed to restore the agrarian regulations of 1939–1941, even while the Germans still held much of the western regions, showing that it regarded the agrarian reform as a key to farmers' loyalty. The Agrarian Law of 30 August 1944, "Liquidation of the Consequences of German Occupation in Lithuanian Agriculture," stated: "Land, cattle, equipment and buildings taken away by *kulaks* and landlords from toilers – agricultural laborers, *bedniaks* and *seredniaks* – during the German occupation are restored to the legal owners who had received land from the Soviet authorities in 1940–1941."[19] This law and another, announced on 22 December 1944, ordered an even more radical reform than in 1940. The landholding limit could be lowered from 30 to 20 hectares in regions with fertile soil. All property of those who had fled with the Germans was confiscated, and so too was that of guerrillas "regardless

[16] "Soobshcheniie sekretariu TsK KP(b) Latvii Kalnberzinu [Report for Kalnberziņš, the secretary of the CC of the Latvian Communist party]" (after April 1943), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 135, l. 119.

[17] Documents No. 202 and 212 in V. Malanchuk et al., eds., *Pravda pro Uniiu. Dokumenty i materially* (L'viv: Kameniar, 1968), pp. 314, 325; Document No. 8 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996), p. 260; Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), pp. 21, 270.

[18] "Klim Savur," UPA's commander-in-chief, "Zariadzhennia v zemel'nii spravi [Decree on the agrarian policy]" (15 August 1943), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 70, d. 237, l. 33.

[19] Ju. Paleckis, chair of the presidium of the Supreme Council of Lithuania, "Zakon o likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi okkupatsii v sel'skom khoziaistve Litovskoi SSR [Law on the liquidation of the consequences of German occupation in Lithuanian agriculture]" (30 August 1944), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 10, l. 13.

of whether their families or [distant] relatives still live there." Other Baltic republics issued similar laws. The lands of peasants defined as passive collaborators with the Germans were cut to 5 hectares in Lithuania, 5 to 7 hectares in Estonia, and 7 to 8 hectares in Latvia. Confiscated lands were to be distributed among agricultural workers and *bedniaks* to enable them to set farms of 10 to 15 hectares.[20]

Facing external menace in 1939–1940, the government had rushed the reform in order to secure at least some support. It left land distribution to village councils, which let wealthy farmers choose which land to surrender and retain.[21] Hence agricultural laborers received the worst land; besides, they had no horses, equipment, or houses on their lots. Some new settlers could not start their businesses under such conditions and rejected the land offered. In 1944, the government sought to avoid this mistake. The new agrarian laws stated that land taken from *kulaks* should at least match the quality of that which they retained. The government confiscated "the excess" of agricultural equipment, draft animals, and buildings from wealthy peasants in proportion to the alienated land because "they cannot be fully used after acreage reduction" and distributed these assets among agricultural laborers and *bedniaks* for free or for little cost. Thus the poor received the essentials needed for private farming. The machines confiscated from wealthy peasants were taken to machine and tractor stations or machine and horse rental stations, where farmers could rent them. The families of Soviet soldiers enjoyed privileges in the quality of land and the distribution of property. New settlers were freed from tax in kind for one or two years and received discount credits to purchase seeds and construction materials.[22] The government also set taxes lower than those in 1940–1941 and made the taxation scale less progressive. The social status of *bedniaks* rose dramatically. In Latvia, former agricultural laborers and *bedniaks* constituted 50.4 percent of the chairs of the village councils.[23]

[20] Paleckis, "Zakon o likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi okkupatsii," ll. 13, 14; "O merakh po vypolneniiu zakona 'O likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi okkupatsii v sel'skom khoziaistve' [Implementation of the law 'Liquidation of the Consequences of German Occupation in Agriculture']" (22 December 1944), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 10, ll. 8, 11; Allik, "Kratkii otchet," l. 59; Mitriushkin, "O rukovodstve Latviiskoi partiinoi organizatsii," l. 71.

[21] D. Shupikov, head of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist Party, "O xode osushchestvleniia postanovleniia 'O likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi okkupatsii v sel'skom khoziaistve' [About the implementation of the law 'Liquidation of the Consequences of German Occupation in Agriculture']" (12 September 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 314, l. 23; "Obzor vystuplenii delegatov na V s'ezde KP(b) Litvy [Overview of the Delegates' speeches at the 5th Congress of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 12, op. 122, d. 14., l. 22.

[22] "O merakh po vypolneniiu zakona 'O likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi okkupatsii v sel'skom khoziaistve,'" l. 8; Paleckis, "Zakon o likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi okkupatsii," l. 14; Shatalin to Stalin (17 May 1945), GARF, f. 17, op. 122, d. 94, l. 146; N. Karotamm, "Otchet o rabote TsK KP(b)E [Report of the CC of the Estonian Communist Party]" (4 February 1947), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 894, l. 17.

[23] E. Ronis, deputy chair of the Latvian Council of People's Commissars (28 May 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 4, l. 72.

The postwar reform gave more assets to more peasants than had the 1939–1940 reforms or those conducted by the Baltic states in the interwar period. Between 1944 and 1948, 96,330 Lithuanian peasants received land from 3,926 farmers whose lands were cut because of passive collaboration with the Germans, 19,505 farmers who lost land above the limit, 16,143 farms confiscated from the families of guerrillas, and 6,975 farms owned by those who fled with the Germans and thus were irrelevant to the proportion of losers and winners.[24] The balance was clear: 96,330 farmer families gained and 39,574 families lost land through the reform. In Latvia by 1947, 49,000 agricultural laborers had received land, and 21,000 *bedniaks* had increased their lots; in western Belorussia, these numbers were 32,585 and 130,000, respectively.[25]

As in 1939–1940, agrarian reform was designed to fuel class confrontation. Moscow lectured local communists: "Banditry cannot be eradicated and bourgeois-nationalist insurgency cannot be successfully suppressed by police and military operations alone, without raising the broad masses against them."[26] Agrarian reform was the means to rally the masses. Soviet leaders viewed it as "the most important political vehicle for further consolidation of the toiling peasants around Soviet power and their mobilization for the fight against the enemies of the people," the nationalists. Some victims of the reform joined the guerrillas, but overall, it brought the Soviets many more allies than foes. Latvian leaders claimed that "new settlers who received land from the Soviet authorities are loyal to us; they are a reliable basis of Soviet authorities in the countryside."[27]

While the reform was an efficient means of acquiring peasant support, other aspects of agrarian policy were irrational and raised resistance. Stalinist dogma made the party adopt a simplistic definition of insurgency, taking into account only the economic motivations of the guerrillas and downplaying others. Unlike the Decree on Land, which confiscated property mainly from landlords and the Crown, the agrarian reforms in the western borderlands predominantly struck wealthier farmers. Communists argued: "The *kulak*

[24] A. Efremenko, "Vosstanovlenie sovetskikh zemel'nykh otnoshenii i uglublenie agrarnykh preobrazovanii v Litve v 1944–1948 gg," *Istoriia SSSR* 5:135, 1972.

[25] Janis Kalnberziņš, "Politicheskaia situatsiia v respublike [Political situation in the republic]" (29 January 1947), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 23, l. 49; Panteleimon Ponomarenko, first secretary of the CC of the Belorussian Communist party, "Otchet o rabote TsK KP(b)B [Report of the CC of the Belorussian Communist party]" (1946), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 139, l. 202v.

[26] M. Suslov, "O nedostatkakh i oshibkakh v rabote partiinoi organizatsii Litovskoi SSR [Flaws and errors of the Lithuanian party organization]" (1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 40, 41.

[27] A. Sniečkus and M. Gedvilas, "Proekt ukaza "O vypolnenii zakona 'O likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi occupatsii v sel'skom khoziaistve'" [Draft of the directive "Implementation of the Law 'Liquidation of the Consequences of German Occupation in Sgriculture']" (August 1945). RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 1, l. 147; Bumbers, chair of the Radio Committee of Latvia, "Otchet o prodelannoi rabote [Report on work]" (2 April 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 3, l. 35.

will always fight us" because they had "confiscated land and means of production from him and passed them to the *bedniaks*."[28] Moscow recognized that nationalism was a major factor of insurgency but believed it was secondary to the class factor. Vladimir Shcherbakov, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, lectured local leaders: "Class struggle is not waning, as some think, but progressively intensifies. … Hit the underground and *kulaks!*"[29] Most top Soviet functionaries viewed *bedniak* and *seredniak* guerrillas as an ignorant tool of *kulaks* who incited other peasants, preferring themselves to maintain civilian infrastructure for the resistance instead of fighting. Ivan Grushetskii, secretary of the Lvov Provincial Party Committee, attempted to explain why some poor peasants fought the Communists: "We know that the *kulak* gives economic and political support to bandits. … The *kulak* is smart and evasive. He acts through his laborer, Ivan, who depends on him. But our police cannot catch the *kulak;* it is much harder to expose him than the naive Ivan. The *kulak* helps bandits; therefore, we must deport him."[30] Following this dogma, the authorities often forgave such "Ivans" caught in action and struck instead at their alleged inciters, most of whom were uninvolved in resistance. They presumed that elimination of wealthy farmers would automatically end insurgency, and they made the police develop a counterinsurgency doctrine on the basis of this postulate. The belief that the *kulak* was the key element of the resistance was probably accurate for the Baltic republics, but not for Ukraine. Yet the proportion of wealthier peasants among the guerrillas grew with time everywhere. In the Baltic region, they became the majority of insurgents. How did this happen? Wealthy farmers hated Communists more than other peasants, but most would have accepted the confiscation of their fields and some other assets had the Communists limited their crusade to these matters alone. However, the party believed that "the *kulak* is the enemy, and we should conduct only one policy toward him: relentless offensive." It followed its traditional strategy: "reliance on the *bedniaks,* alliance with the *seredniaks* and merciless struggle against *kulaks*."[31]

While Soviet agrarian strategy displayed the same general pattern in all western regions, it was not absolutely uniform; it was shaped to some degree by local Communist parties. Ukrainian and Belorussian leaders had been

[28] "Protokol zasedaniia nachal'nikov RO MGB [Meeting of the heads of the district MGB offices]" (16 April 1947), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 90, l. 70.

[29] V. V. Shcherbakov, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, at the 11th Plenum of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party (23 November 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 19, ll. 31, 37.

[30] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei RK KP(b)U [Meeting of the secretaries of the district party committees]" (7 May 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 193, l. 59.

[31] V. Shcherbakov, Head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, at the 11th Plenum of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party (23 November 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 19, l. 43; Antanas Sniečkus "Otchet TsK KP(b)L o vypolnenii postanovleniia TsK VKP(b) ot 15 Avgusta 1945 [Report of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party about the implementation of the VKP(b) CC decision taken on 15 August]" (31 August 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 20, l. 65.

forged by Stalinism during the Great Terror. The government offices in the western provinces of their republics were filled with functionaries from their eastern regions, trained to follow the orders of their party superiors without question. Although 71.4 percent of Ukrainian party leaders at all levels were Ukrainians, which roughly corresponded to the proportion of Ukrainians in this republic, in western Ukraine, only 8.4 percent of district, town, and regional Communist leaders, 12 percent of district and town prosecutors, and 40 percent of judges were natives of this region.[32] Ukrainian and Belorussian leaders had liquidated *kulaks* between 1929 and 1932 and presumed that in the western borderlands, too, wealthy peasants had to be impoverished and then deported. In contrast, many Baltic leaders refused to accept the Stalinist thesis about the intensification of class struggle. They had spent the interwar years in the Communist underground outside the Soviet Union and preserved a Marxist idealism, which was reflected in their policies. Since Slavic officials sent to work in the Baltic region could not speak the local languages, the center had to recruit a larger proportion of administrators from local people than in western Ukraine and Belorussia; these functionaries saw no need for further actions against former *kulaks* once they had been leveled by agrarian reform. Moscow's emissaries to the Baltic region complained:

> The leaders of the CC of the Estonian Communist Party have quite a vague idea of the class stratification in the countryside. … Comrade Siaremat, the Secretary of the Jarvamaa Party Provincial Committee, believes that no *kulaks* exist in his province after the agrarian reform of 1945–46. Comrade Meel, the Secretary of the Harjumaa Party Provincial Committee, states that no poor farmers remain in Estonia. … According to him, "the poor are those who work poorly."[33]

Vasilii Riazanov, head of VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia, wrote: "Party leaders and administrators in some provinces in fact sponsor and protect the *kulaks*. The Supreme Court of Latvia and the Ministry of Justice suggested to the local justice agencies a policy that protects *kulak* farms." Moscow's representative in Lithuania observed a "lack of resolution and, in some cases, direct protection of *kulak* interests by the republican functionaries."[34] The central government reprimanded Baltic Communists for "mixing all social groups in one category, 'toiling peasantry'"[35] and pressed them to attack *kulaks*.

Before the beginning of collectivization in the western borderlands, wealthy farmers were subject to persecution stemming from regulations that Moscow

[32] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 275.

[33] Borkov to A. A. Zhdanov (3 July 1947), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 222, l. 38.

[34] Vasilii Riazanov, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia, "O politicheskom i khoziaistvennom polozhenii v Latviiskoi SSR [Political and economic situation in Latvia]" (1946), PGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 11, l. 67; D. Shupikov, head of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party, "O xode osushchestvleniia postanovleniia [About the implementation of the directive]" (12 September 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 314, l. 24.

[35] "O rezul'tatakh proverki raboty TsK KP(b) Litvy [Inspection of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (August 1946), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 138, l. 53.

forced on republican governments and abuses of power by lower-level local authorities. The state used the law retroactively and applied the *kulak* criteria set in 1929 to those who had fit them before the Soviet reforms, no matter how much property they retained. Wealthier peasants in the Baltic region whose lands were cut, owing to collaboration with the Germans, to 5 or 8 hectares were treated as *kulaks,* although all who owned less than 10 hectares before the reform were regarded as poor and received privileges. Farms of the same size could be termed *seredniak* or *kulak* depending on the acreage held before the Soviet reforms. The VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia mentioned *kulak* farms with 15 hectares of land and *seredniak* farms with 30 hectares and demanded that "the progressive taxation scale should be changed in a way that would allow us to hit hard *kulaks* hiding among the peasants who have lots from 15 to 20 ha."[36] In 1947, the government introduced a steep progressive tax rate. In Lithuania, non-*kulak* farms with an annual income of 15,000 rubles paid 1,535 rubles in taxes, whereas *kulak* farms with the same income paid 7,957 rubles. Janis Dimanis, representative of the Latvian Council of Ministers, observed that in 1948 the tax policy presumed

> a hectare of a *kulak*'s arable land yields two times greater harvest, the milk yield of a *kulak*'s cow is two times higher, twice as much meat is obtained from a *kulak*'s pig, etc. … It was assumed that this tax policy was an efficient incentive to collectivization. … Having imposed on the *kulak* a tax, which considerably exceeds his income and the value of all his property, we artificially created a tax debt.[37]

The taxes imposed on wealthy farmers in the Baltic region, even those whose lots were cut to 5 hectares, grew to 40 percent of their "estimated income" by the end of 1947 and to 75 percent in 1948. In western Belorussia, the taxes paid by *kulaks* more than doubled, as did taxes paid by their Ukrainian counterparts.[38]

The formal pretext for persecution of the wealthy farmers before the beginning of the collectivization was their failure to pay taxes, caused by a combination of discriminatory regulations and the progressive tax scale. Moscow set mandatory delivery norms on the basis of theoretical "biological productivity." *Kulak* farms rarely could pay their taxes in full because after the administration declared that "the bourgeois theory and practice of land grading according to its quality" let *kulaks* "hide the real size of their land property and evade taxes in kind,"[39] the taxation scale counted only the quantity of land.

[36] Vasilii Riazanov, "Otchet Biuro TsK VKP(b) po Latviiskoi SSR [Report of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia]" (1947), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 23, l. 14; Ponomarenko, "Otchet o rabote TsK KP(b)B," l. 205v.

[37] Zunde, "Lithuania's Economy," p. 149; Document No. 170 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* p. 349.

[38] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 97; Taagepera, *Estonia,* p. 81; Documents No. 3 and 7 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), pp. 582, 659.

[39] "O rezul'tatakh proverki raboty TsK KP(b) Litvy," l. 65.

The agrarian law enforced in the Baltic region made wealthy farmers cede their best lands, leaving them with a large acreage of poor soil subject to progressive taxation. In addition, with the beginning of collectivization, village administrations received the right to resettle *kulaks* whose farms were inside the lands allotted to collective farms. They moved these unfortunates typically to worse lands; this did not affect the taxation of the *kulaks*.[40] Soviet regulations did not prohibit hiring labor, but the government still accused those who did this of exploiting toilers. Because of this harassment, many prosperous farmers abstained from hiring, thus leaving much of their land uncultivated. Owners of Latvian farms of over 20 hectares abstained from seeding one-third of their plough land in 1946 but were taxed for the whole.[41] Many *kulaks* could not pay these high taxes, which party functionaries sent to supervise the western republics interpreted as a "crime against the state."[42] Ivan Lebedev, the second secretary of the Latvian Communist party, had just one solution to this problem: He suggested pressing the *kulak* "ten times as hard. If he grabs the Soviet authority by the throat, we must grab his more sensitive body part."[43]

The state freed *bedniaks* from mandatory deliveries for one or two years after they received their lands but fined *seredniaks* for the products they failed to deliver at twice their value on the free market.[44] If *kulaks* could not pay taxes in full, they faced confiscation of their property or even criminal investigation. Estonian Minister of Justice A. Joer instructed his staff: "Every judge must always remember the tasks the agencies of proletarian dictatorship perform during the intensification of class struggle and act accordingly. The Soviet system must be consolidated by treating its enemies without mercy, without succumbing to sentimentality." He reprimanded judges who applied the Civil Code or the lenient Clause 61(3) of the Criminal Code to wealthy farmers: "All *kulaks* who failed to fulfill the mandatory food or lumber delivery norm should have been prosecuted according to Clause 58(14) of the Criminal Code,"[45] which dealt with treason to the state. Of all *kulaks* sentenced in Latvia in 1945 for failure to pay taxes, 12 percent received one-year jail terms, 40 percent received two-year terms, 15 percent received between two and five

[40] Document No. 171 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* p. 351.

[41] Kalnberziņš, "Politicheskaia situatsiia v respublike," l. 51.

[42] Suslov, "Otchet o rabote buro TsK VKP(b) po Litve [Report of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania]" (July 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, l. 25; VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia, "Sostoianie s khlebozagotovkami [Grain procurements]" (October 1946), RGASPI, f. 600, op.1, d. 11, l. 2.

[43] "Stenogramma zasedaniia Buro TsK KP(b) po Latvii [Minutes of the Briefing of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia]" (21 October 1946), RGASPI, f. 600, op.1, d.11, ll. 8, 9.

[44] Allik, "Kratkii otchet," l. 106; Gedvilas and Sniečkus, "Ob obiazatel'noi postavke zerna gozudarstvu [Mandatory deliveries of grain to the state]" (1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 13, l. 10.

[45] A. Joer, minister of justice of Estonia (23 January 1945 and 11 December 1946), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 257, ll. 46, 47, 54.

years of jail, and 11 percent received 10 years.[46] In 1946, the state launched 923 criminal cases against Lithuanian "saboteurs of mandatory deliveries"; as a result, 569 were arrested. In the same year, 300 Latvian *kulak* farms were confiscated for "sabotage" of mandatory deliveries, and another 300 were seized in 1948. When a Latvian procurement agent requested an equal prosecution of all those who had failed to pay taxes whatever their background, he was reprimanded for violating "the class principle."[47]

Local administrators also abused wealthy farmers. The methods used to enforce agrarian reform inevitably provoked violations of law from below. Some local officials sympathized with wealthier peasants and softened their superiors' pressure; others, originally *bedniaks* and agricultural laborers, noticed that the state broke the laws and did so themselves, often treating wealthy farmers more harshly than the center required. Legally, only *kulaks* who collaborated with the Germans could have their land cut to 5 or 8 hectares, and their personal belongings were inviolable. As with *kulak,* the government deliberately left the definition of *collaboration* vague so as to give additional leverage to local authorities. In practice, those who had assiduously paid their taxes during the German occupation often were branded as collaborators, thus losing their property. The state prosecutor of Latvia found ample evidence of

> illegal confiscation of personal property and cattle, illegal searches and arrests, imposition of fines that are not stipulated by law and levying illegal taxes. … Officials commit these outrageous crimes against personal inviolability and property rights not in order to safeguard the public peace and state interests but because of greed – they appropriate cattle, animals and other personal property.[48]

Often *bedniaks,* on their own initiative, plundered their wealthier neighbors, using clause 2 of the Agrarian Law of 1944, which stated: "… toiling peasants … can take away from landlords and *kulaks* land, cattle, crops, agricultural equipment and buildings … without waiting for their formal transfer by the Soviet authority."[49] This provision provoked abuses, as the state must have realized would occur, but it was useful for fueling class struggle.

In Ukraine, wealthy peasants were persecuted more harshly than in other regions, thanks to their sworn enemy, Khrushchev. More than any other

[46] Baliasnikov, state prosecutor of Lithuania, to Suslov, "Spravka o privlechenii k ugolovnoi otvetstvennosti [Criminal investigation cases]" (15 December 1945), RGASPI, f. 598, op. 1, d. 18, ll.123, 124 (emphasis in the original).

[47] Document No. 9.16 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m,* Vol. 3 (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), p. 108; "Stenogramma zasedaniia Buro TsK KP(b) po Latvii," ll. 8, 9; K. Tselov, deputy chair of the Latvian Council of Ministers, to Riazanov (30 January 1947), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 26, l. 60; Document No. 170 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* p. 349.

[48] Mishutin, state prosecutor of Latvia, "O sostoianii sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti na territorii Latviiskoi SSR [Upholding of socialist law in Latvia]" (April 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 10, ll. 56, 57.

[49] Paleckis, "Zakon o likvidatsii posledstvii nemetskoi okkupatsii," l. 13.

republican leader, he equated *kulaks* with insurgents. Ignoring the data revealing the social composition of the UPA, he maintained: "When we fight OUN, we fight *kulaks;* it would be wrong to fight bandits, while bypassing *kulaks*."[50] He believed *kulaks* had to be held responsible for the attacks by guerrillas and ordered the police as follows:

> Compile lists of [guerrillas'] accomplices – those with alien social backgrounds, such as *kulaks* and nationalist priests. … If bandits commit a crime in a village, … two or three [of the alien elements] must be arrested and their families deported as bandit accomplices. We may commit some judicial mistakes because some of them may have no contact with the bands, but that is fine. … This method must be employed. Any *kulak* is a [guerrilla] accomplice.[51]

Most wealthy peasants had no contacts with the UPA, at least at the start of the Soviet reoccupation, but many fell victim to this policy. Elsewhere, *kulaks* were resettled in houses confiscated from guerrilla families, making them targets of guerrilla terror.[52] Assessing the results of the anti-*kulak* campaign, the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia boasted:

> The economic restraint of *kulaks* attained by increasing product delivery norms; taxation; deprivation of credits and supplies; their expulsion from the Soviet, cooperative and economic agencies; and harsh repressions in case of failure to pay taxes … hit hard the *kulaks* in the Latvian countryside, totally destroyed the basis of the armed nationalist bands, eliminated the economic and political influence of *kulaks* on the people and considerably tightened the discipline of the toiling peasantry.[53]

This statement was only partly true. The farms of wealthy peasants were devastated, their prestige was ruined, and other peasants realized that the authorities would hesitate at nothing, but the anti-*kulak* campaign did not destroy the social basis of the resistance. It merely changed its composition. Persecuted and robbed by the state, wealthier farmers streamed to the guerrillas. Ultimately, in a self-fulfilling prophecy, the resistance in the Baltic region became what Moscow perceived it to be, a movement dominated by *kulaks,* largely because the authorities left them no alternative but to resist. The chair of the presidium of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, Justas Paleckis, drew this grim conclusion:

> The comrades who came from Moscow did not understand the [local] situation, oriented us wrongly and committed several excesses [*peregiby*]. … In fact, "dekulakization" took place under various pretexts, although without the [mass] deportation of *kulak*

[50] "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 3:102, 1995; Document No. 3 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 585.

[51] "Stenogramma rechi t. Khrushcheva na zasedanii sekretarei obkomov [Minutes of Comrade Khrushchev's speech at the meeting of secretaries of provincial party committees]" (15 May 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2420, l. 5.

[52] "Spravka ob ispravlenii oshibok i nedostatkov [Correction of mistakes and shortcomings]" (18 August 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 27, l. 100.

[53] Riazanov, "Otchet Biuro TsK VKP(b) po Latviiskoi SSR," l. 13.

families and in the absence of a collective farm system. This revitalized banditry because thousands of embittered and impoverished people are wandering without shelter; furthermore, the former *kulaks* arouse pity and sympathy among *seredniaks*. Finally, hundreds of thousands of hectares remain uncultivated.[54]

A large part of the rural community in the western borderlands and the majority of the anti-Soviet resistance comprised those the Communist party identified as *seredniaks*. Although most *seredniaks* preferred neutrality in the conflict between state and insurgents, more of them resented rather than supported the new administration because their social status had dropped relative to their poorer neighbors, and the few benefits they had received from Soviet reforms often were outweighed by higher taxes and fear of collectivization and deportation. The borderline between *kulaks* and *seredniaks* has always been blurred. In February 1945, the Lithuanian government issued a directive warning against "mixing *kulaks* and *seredniaks* and extrapolating on the latter anti-*kulak* measures, which is the most outrageous violation of Soviet policy."[55] However, the strategy of class confrontation inevitably made the wealthier *seredniaks* a target for illegal actions. The VKP(b) CC bureaus frequently extended the anti-*kulak* policy to well-off *seredniaks*. The refrain about "restraint and oppression [*pritesnenie*] of *kulaks* and better-off [*zazhitochnye*] farmers" became central in Communist phraseology.[56] Paleckis complained that in Lithuania, "the law was violated everywhere, 4,000 households were confiscated and ruined as a result, … and not a few of them belonged to *seredniaks*."[57] Better-off peasants often "voluntarily" ceded parts of their land, reducing their acreage to 15 hectares.[58] This maintained their after-tax income and guaranteed their place among *seredniaks*. They had bought land before the Soviet occupation on money saved for many years and were naturally embittered when they had to part with it. They also resented the new taxation system that established mandatory deliveries of meat and milk exclusively on the basis of the owned acreage but did not take into account the actual number of cattle in the households.[59]

[54] Paleckis to Zhdanov (12 March 1948), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 305, l. 19.

[55] A. Sniečkus and M. Gedvilas, "O predvaritel'nykh itogakh vypolneniia zakona o zemle [Preliminary results of the agrarian reform]" (23 February 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 10, l. 40.

[56] E. Ronis, deputy chair of the Latvian Council of People's Commissars, "O sostoianii primeneniia naemnogo truda v edinolichnykh khoziaistvakh [Hiring of labor by individual farmers]" (1 October 1946), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 18, l. 78; Kalnberziņš, "Politicheskaia situatsiia v respublike," l. 51.

[57] Ju. Paleckis to Zhdanov (12 March 1948), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 305, l. 19.

[58] "Stenogramma soveshchaniia upolnomochennykh TsK KP(b)L po uezdam po khlebozakupu [Minutes of the Meeting of the provincial procurement plenipotentiaries of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (27 December 1946), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 1, l. 155; Ronis to S. Zelenov, deputy chair of VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia (2 November 1946), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 18, l. 122.

[59] Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), p. 166.

While some *bedniaks* resisted the Soviet regime for various reasons, those who supported it were overwhelmingly poor. These supporters, attracted by the agrarian reform, nevertheless disliked other aspects of the Soviet agrarian policy. Even in regions where the authorities did not press for immediate collectivization, they took preliminary steps toward it, revealing their intentions. One such step was the campaign against homesteads. In the old territories, most peasants traditionally lived under communal land tenure; the village community, rather than individual peasants, administered the land by distributing it among its members. In contrast, homestead land tenure presumed that every farm owned land as private property. The Soviet government believed that the communal form of property would make collectivization smoother. Most peasants in the western regions, however, preferred homestead to communal land use. Half the West Belorussian farmers lived in homesteads by 1939, whereas in Lithuania, 90 percent of peasant farms in 1946 were homesteads.[60] Agricultural laborers who received land from the state also sought to organize their farms as homesteads, but in February 1941, when the agrarian reform had already been accomplished in all borderland regions, Moscow belatedly ordered administrators to distribute the land in a way that would make the new settlers live in villages rather than separate homesteads. When the Soviets returned in 1944, they resumed this policy.[61] Moscow inspectors wrote: "Since the homestead system is already seriously impeding the organization of collective farms in the Baltic region, we recommend the prohibition of homestead building."[62] In order to encourage new settlers to abandon homesteads, the state reduced taxes, provided credit and fertilizers, and gave preference in equipment rental to settlers in villages. Such farmers were few. The resistance to its campaign against homesteads appalled Moscow. Its emissaries reported that even "some leading administrators and agrarian functionaries spread the harmful *kulak* theory about the allegedly progressive homestead land use." In fact, "all decisions of the republican and local party and administrative agencies aim to consolidate the homestead system."[63]

This clash between Moscow's representatives and Baltic Communists reflected different views about agrarian policy. Some Baltic leaders took seriously Moscow's rhetoric that the major goal of agrarian reform was the creation of independent and efficient middle-sized farms. In September 1946, the Estonian government issued a draft agrarian code aimed at agriculture based

[60] "O rezul'tatakh proverki raboty TsK KP(b) Litvy," l. 52; Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine,* p. 32.

[61] Document No. 1.23 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, p. 175.

[62] Borkov to Zhdanov, "O khode vypolneniia postanovleniia TsK VKP(b) ot 21 maia 1947 [Implementation of the directive of the VKP(b) CC issued on 21 May 1947]" (6 February 1948), RGASPI, f. 17, op.122, d. 319, l. 6.

[63] "Spravka o nekotorykh sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh izmeneniiakh," ll. 16, 17; VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, "O rezul'tatakh proverki zaiavleniia v TsK VKP(b) chlenov plenuma [Consideration of the statement of the plenum's delegates submitted to the VKP(b) CC]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 34, l. 93.

on middle-sized homesteads that held land in perpetual tenure, traded products on the free market, and let farmers hire labor. Moscow refused the draft. Its representatives noted:

> The class essence of this draft is the long-term legalization of the homestead system existing in the republic and the consolidation of *kulak* farms. … Farmers receive land in perpetual tenure free of charge and they are provided with state [notary] acts confirming this. Land is given to the "toiling" peasants; therefore, *kulaks* receive land in perpetual tenure on equal conditions. … If every farm receives land in perpetual tenure, grave problems will emerge during an eventual shift to the socialist mode of production.[64]

The Estonian leaders believed that after the agrarian reform, *kulaks* became in fact "toiling peasants." Moscow's reaction, obscene in its cynicism, shows that the central government always intended to deceive peasants and violate its own populist law that gave them land in perpetual tenure. The attempt to settle new farmers in villages instead of homesteads aroused suspicions that the state harbored plans for collectivization and antagonized some new settlers whom the Communists regarded as their natural allies.

Ill-thought-out clauses of the agrarian laws alienated other *bedniaks*. In regions with infertile soil, farmers had to cultivate more land in order to maintain an average living standard, but the Soviet taxation scale was based solely on the acreage held by a farmer. Janis Dimanis, a procurement agent in Latvia, was shocked by this clause: "How can one think that all the land is arable in Latvia, where small patches of fertile soil are interspersed with huge acreages of marshes, bushes, and dunes?"[65] While *bedniaks'* taxes in 1944–1947 were low for the fertile regions, the living standards of peasants in provinces with poor soil dropped, as Paleckis explained:

> After the taxation scale based on land quality was abolished, the peasants who live in infertile regions found themselves in an extremely hard situation. They sometimes have a large acreage but remain poor, being forced to fulfill the delivery norms set for *kulaks*. Some complained that they had to sell their last horse in order to pay the taxes. Naturally, the political situation in such areas is the gravest and banditry is widespread.[66]

The benefits poor peasants received from agrarian reforms were offset by the campaign against homesteads, illegal actions by the local officials or the state, unfair taxation in infertile regions, and fears about collectivization. Some embittered *bedniaks* joined the resistance, yet until collectivization, the key fact for most was that they had received land from the state. Many defended this land and their new social status against guerrillas who sought to restore the prewar status quo.

[64] V. Andrianov and N. Itskov to N. Patolichev, secretary of TsK VKP(b) (16 September 1946), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 170, l. 153.
[65] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml',* p. 175.
[66] Paleckis to Zhdanov (12 March 1948), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 305, l. 20.

TABLE 5.1 *Impact of the Soviet Agrarian Reforms on Farmers' Landholding in the Baltic Republics (Percentage)*

	Lithuania			Latvia		Estonia		
	Early 1940	1941	1948	Early 1940	By 1947	1939	1941	By 1946
<5 ha	27.4	17.2	30.3	16	36.7	22.3	15.5	15.8
5–10 ha	25.7	40	37.4	18		13.9	13	15.1
10–20 ha	29.6	27.1	27.6	33.2	46	26.6	39.3	36.8
20–30 ha	10.9	15.7	4.7	15.8	17.3	17.5	32.1	32
>30 ha	6.4	–	–	17	–	19.7	0.1	0.3

Sources: Baranauskas, "Spravka o zemlepol'zovanii v Litve," l. 16; Mitriushkin, "O rukovodstve Latviiskoi partiinoi organizatsii," l. 17; Allik, "Kratkii otchet," l. 62; Zunde, "Lithuania's Economy," p. 147.

Despite the government's official statement that the goal of the agrarian reform was to advance middle-sized farming, it did not wish to foster efficient private agriculture. In 1944–1947, the Lithuanian government confiscated 2.5 times as much land as in 1940. Had it distributed that land among existing farms, it easily could have raised the average farm to middle size. Instead, it distributed only 59 percent of that land to farmers, retaining the rest for collective and state farms. By November 1946, the average Lithuanian new farmer possessed 8.9 hectares of land, enough to qualify as a *bedniak*.[67] The proportion of farms smaller than 10 hectares, regarded as too small to support a family, actually rose from 53.1 percent on the eve of the first Soviet occupation to 57.2 percent after the reform of 1940 and then to 67.7 percent in 1948. The poorest of farms, barely able to survive (less than 5 hectares), decreased from 27.4 percent in early 1940 to 17.2 percent after the first Soviet agrarian reform but then increased again to 30.3 percent in 1948. In Latvia, the proportion of *bedniak* farms also grew, but only slightly (Table 5.1).

The central government deliberately fragmented farms, as is clear from the comments of its representatives about the draft Estonian agrarian code: "The project suggests measures against the fragmentation of farms – this is a thoroughly bourgeois, if not worse, agrarian concept. It contradicts our class policy in the countryside and creates obvious problems for the eventual shift to the socialist mode of production."[68] The government's primary objective in 1944–1948, as in 1939–1941, was political rather than economic. It gave land to those who longed for it, no matter whether these

[67] Efremenko, "Vosstanovlenie sovetskikh zemel'nykh otnoshenii," pp. 134, 135; Shcherbakov at the 11th plenum (23 November 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 19, l. 38.

[68] Andrianov and Itskov to Patolichev (16 September 1946), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 170, l. 154.

farms were efficient, in order to get maximum political benefits, but it opposed the development of "a private proprietor mentality," which would have emerged had the state pursued an economically rational agenda and organized larger private farms.

Agricultural production declined because of farm fragmentation and the unwise taxation system that prompted predominantly *kulaks* but also some new settlers to abandon their land and also because a part of the land owned by peasants remained idle: Wealthier farmers could not cultivate much of their fields having no workforce, whereas poor peasants often had no horses and equipment to support their farms. The free market limited the state's ability to squeeze the peasants. Despite the tremendous pressure Moscow applied to the Baltic leaders, their efforts to increase the volume of procurements in response to the 1946 famine in the old territories and Moldova were disappointing. Although some procurement agents advised the government to take a scientific approach to agrarian problems instead of relying "solely on class intuition," Janis Kalnberziņš, first secretary of the Latvian Communist party, drew the conclusion out of this episode that the "only possibility to secure [enough] grain would be to make the state the owner of the grain."[69] Collectivization was expected to produce the maximum possible surplus despite causing a further decline in production in the short run. The republican governments and the bureaus established by Moscow heatedly discussed collectivization, weighing the escalation of resistance against the desire to control agriculture. Ukrainian and Belorussian leaders had never seen an alternative to collectivization. Grushetskii stated in February 1945: "The Directive of the Party CC orders us to destroy banditry and thus clear the way for collectivization. Some comrades understand it wrongly. They think that we will start collectivization [only] after we have destroyed banditry. … We have to fight banditry and enforce collectivization simultaneously."[70]

On 19 September 1946, the central government issued a directive, "The Violations of the Collective Farm Charter," that demanded the return to collective farms of all lands reclaimed by their members during the war.[71] The governments of the western republics, however, had no funds to sponsor collectivization in the borderlands. Ukraine and Belorussia sought first of all to restore large *kolkhozes* in the old territories and use scarce resources in the major eastern grain-producing regions with fertile soil. In early 1945, the Ukrainian government tried to organize several collective farms in the western provinces as well, but the process went slowly because funding was

[69] "Stenogramma zasedaniia Buro TsK KP(b) po Latvii," l. 23; Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml'*, p. 176.

[70] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei RK KP(b)U [Meeting of secretaries of Ukrainian Party District Provincial Committees]" (20 February 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 194, l. 52.

[71] Mazepa, secretary of the L'vov Provincial Committee, "Otchet o rabote L'vovskogo Obkoma KP(b)U [Report of the Lvov Provincial Party Committee]" (February 1947), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d.793, l. 51.

insufficient, rural authorities were weak, and armed resistance was fierce. A party official described a typical *kolkhoz* in western Ukraine. It "employs 10 able-bodied men, 3 of whom have been arrested by the NKVD; 15 able-bodied women; and 39 teenagers. Since the beginning of the spring seeding, four or five persons have been working [for the collective farm] regularly. … The rest refuse to work. Some say that they are busy at home, while others do not wish to work for the collective farm at all."[72] By June 1941, 12.8 percent of households were collectivized in western Ukraine, whereas at the end of 1946, collective farms embraced only 1.5 percent of the households, 4.0 percent by November 1947. By 1948, only 52 percent of the collective farms organized in 1939–1941 were restored.[73]

The policies of the Baltic leaders in the first years after the Soviet reoccupation were shaped more by Communist literature than by experience. They pursued a sort of national communism, hoping to find a unique Baltic road to socialism, and adopted the Leninist ideal of a voluntary cooperative movement, arguing that Moscow's pressure to expedite collectivization by all means would be counterproductive in economic and political terms. Nikolai Karotamm, first secretary of the CC of the Estonian Communist party, told a Russian official: "Don't promote collective farms so ardently. We will not let you do this." He did not mind collective farms organized on a voluntary basis but insisted that these first farms "should be good, exemplary and demonstrate with their work the advantage of the *kolkhoz* system over private farming."[74] However, on 21 May 1947, the Politburo of the VKP(b) CC issued a directive, "Organization of Collective Farms in the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian Soviet Socialist Republics," that initiated the secret planning of mass collectivization by the Baltic governments. Until the fall of 1948, they still maintained the voluntary principle of recruitment and chastised overzealous administrators who resorted to coercion.[75]

Communist leaders in every region understood that farmers dreaded collectivization. A procurement agent in Latvia admitted that "all peasants resent the collective farms. We have not heard a single positive opinion." A high-ranking Soviet official reported from western Ukraine said: "One can often hear peasants saying: 'We don't mind the Soviet government

[72] Odiagailo, instructor of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party "O dopushchennykh oshibkakh v organizatsii kolkhoza im. Voroshilova [Mistakes in the organization of the Voroshilov collective farm]" (23 April 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2221, l. 5.

[73] Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine,* p. 35; Document No. 84 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), p. 297; O. S. Rublev, "Notes," *UIZh* 1:128, 1996.

[74] "Stenogramma soveshchaniia upolnomochennykh TsK KP(b)L po uezdam," l. 169; Borkov to Zhdanov, "O khode vypolneniia postanovleniia TsK VKP(b) ot 21 maia 1947," ll. 5; Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody (1944–1956)* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), p. 191.

[75] Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy,* p. 190.

but without collective farms.'" A party inspector wrote that opposition to collectivization in western Belorussia was "universal. The rural population thinks of collectivization as a catastrophic disaster."[76] Despite understanding that collectivization would be unpopular, the central government pressed it without waiting until the insurgency was fully destroyed. After the Communists failed to rally voluntary support for *kolkhozes,* coercion was the only alternative.

The government used the low productivity of small farms to justify collectivization. A procurement agent in Latvia, expressed its point of view: "Why did grain procurements proceed so slowly? Because agriculture is being restored on the basis of small and middle-sized individual farming. … We can only raise [the production of] the *kulak* farm to the prewar level if we allow the *kulak* to exploit agricultural laborers as much as he wants." Since this was impossible, "we should start collectivisation. Some people think that collective farms can emerge spontaneously in Latvia, [that we should] sit and wait until this idea comes to the peasant's mind. The theory of the spontaneous collectivisation movement is baseless. … The conditions necessary for the beginning of the collectivisation movement already exist."[77]

The steady increase in taxes beginning in 1947 showed peasants that the government was planning to strangle independent farming sooner or later. The Ukrainian government accelerated collectivization beginning in the summer of 1947. By 1948, 10 percent of West Ukrainian households were collectivized; by 1949, their share increased to 49 percent, and by June 1950, they made up 96 percent.[78] The Baltic leaders who resisted collectivization eventually succumbed or lost their jobs, as did much of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist party. The Baltic governments started mass collectivization in January 1949, when *kolkhozes* embraced only 3.9 percent of Lithuanian, 5.8 percent of Estonian, and 8 percent of Latvian farms.[79] In Estonia, the proportion of collectivized farms grew to 71.1 percent by 25 May 1949 and to 97.1 percent by July 1952. In Lithuania, 65 percent of farms were collectivized by the end of 1950 and 96 percent by September 1952. In Latvia, the percentage of collective farms grew to 71.6 percent by May 1949.[80]

[76] "Stenogramma soveshchaniia upolnomochennykh TsK KP(b)L po uezdam," l. 151; Bormotov, instructor of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the VKP(b) CC, to Shamberg (22 August 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 637, l. 15; Document No. 29 in V. Vasil'ev, et al., eds., *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 97.

[77] "Stenogramma soveshchaniia upolnomochennykh TsK KP(b)L po uezdam," ll. 145–148.

[78] "Neizvestnaia initsiativa Khrushcheva," *Otechestvennye arkhivy* 2:31, 1993; "Protokol s materialami sluzhby VV MGB Ukrainskogo Okruga [Data related to the service of the MGB security troops in the Ukrainian district]" (no date), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 1396, l.520; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 362.

[79] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 99.

[80] Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians,* p. 179; V. Stanley Vardys, "The Partisan Movement in Postwar Lithuania," in Vardys, *Lithuania under the Soviets,* p. 107; Diana Bleiere,

The collectivization "movement" was facilitated by mass deportations. Even the Baltic leaders eventually adopted the rhetoric and mentality of those who had herded peasants into *kolkhozes* in the Soviet Union. By December 1947, the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist party believed that "measures aimed at the liquidation of banditry should go along with an attack against *kulaks*" and demanded that the provincial party leaders "intensify considerably the repressions against *kulaks* in response to terrorist acts of *kulak*-nationalist bands."[81] Karotamm at first objected to forced collectivization, but in January 1949 he gave a speech supporting the mass deportation of wealthier peasants:

> Regarding the *kulaks,* we have up to now applied a policy of restriction and displacement. The time has come to switch policy and liquidate the *kulaks* as a class in the Estonian SSR, deporting the *kulaks* and their families, as well as families of German collaborators, out of the boundaries of the republic. … It is essential that the action be carried out simultaneously in the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian SSRs.[82]

Karotamm's conversion came too late: He was fired a year later because he allegedly "guided the party organization toward a peaceful coexistence with hostile class elements."[83] Deportations conducted on the eve of collectivization targeted not only the groups mentioned by Karotamm but all other active opponents of *kolkhozes,* especially in western Ukraine, where Communist leaders had fewer scruples than their Baltic counterparts. Leonid Mel'nikov, Khrushchev's successor as the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist party, explained to local party leaders how to break the resistance to collectivization: "Comrade Khrushchev said bluntly to the peasants of this village [Dobrosin]: Since your village does not fight enemies of the Soviet authority, you have to join collective farms or the whole village will be sent to Siberia. This was an absolutely clear message."[84] The police often arrested peasants reluctant to give up their property, claiming that they helped the insurgents, but released those who agreed to join *kolkhozes*. The government attained mass collectivization with blackmail of this sort. The outcome of collectivization in the borderlands was the same as it had been in the old territories: In the words of J. Vanags, rector of the Latvian Academy of Agriculture, the "agriculture went down, down and down," and the gross yield of grain

"Repressions against Farmers in Latvia in 1944–1953," in Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 247.

[81] Document No. 4.16 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, pp. 105, 106, 109.

[82] Rein Taagepera, "Western Awareness of Soviet Deportations in Estonia," in Kristi Kuuk and Toivo Raun, eds., *Soviet Deportations in Estonia: Impact and Legacy* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2007), p. 113. SSR stands for Soviet Socialist Republic.

[83] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 82.

[84] Documents No. 7 and 13 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 246, 656, 759.

fell to one-third of the prewar level.[85] The earnings of collective farmers in terms of distributed grain dropped in Estonia by 58 percent between 1949 and 1952 and in Latvia by 65 percent; of 937 Estonian *kolkhozes* in 1952, 234 paid to their workers only half a kilo of grain per workday, and 200 paid no wages.[86] Stanislav Strelčunas, deputy minister of construction in Lithuania, bitterly commented on collectivization: "How we will look during communism? Slaves – devastated, without any original thought, trained to obey. … In the past, peasants were prosperous in Lithuania, but now they are living worse and worse. Collectivization brings poverty and the degradation of peasantry."[87]

It was not so much collectivization itself as the preliminary steps toward it that sustained anti-Soviet resistance. In 1944–1946, a large proportion of guerrillas were peasants fearing collectivization, but by 1948, the insurgency had largely exhausted its potential. The mass collectivization produced only a brief surge of the insurgency: Although it provoked an influx of *kolkhoz* opponents into the resistance, its other components vanished at that time. Many farmers had identified the goals of Soviet agrarian policy long before mass collectivization began. By 1948, those who opposed it strongly had joined the guerrillas and had been killed or arrested or had realized the futility of struggle. Other farmers, tired of endless violence, became resigned to joining the collective farms or attempted to move to the cities. Guerrillas' kin were their most reliable supporters. After the wealthier families were exiled from the Baltic region, the insurgents, many of whom were former *kulaks* at that time, lost their civilian infrastructure. Their supply base also dwindled because all peasants had to cede their property to collective farms, many of which were defended by police and militia. The remaining guerrillas spent their time mainly in search of food. The strength of resistance declined dramatically after collectivization. Stalinists believed that this proved that they had identified the insurgency's social basis correctly. In fact, the state first aggravated the problem, making farmers resist, and then struggled to eliminate the consequences of this policy, ruining lives and suffering casualties in unnecessary fighting.

Conclusion

The agrarian reform became the cornerstone of Soviet pacification. The Communists intended to implement the basic populist principle "take from the rich and give to the poor" and thus to win the sympathy of the peasant majority. As Jan Gross observes, "The state in a peasant society has always been a distant and hostile force. Its agents appeared only to collect taxes or to enforce

[85] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml',* p. 273.

[86] Document No. 12 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy,* p. 316; Documents No. 180 and 181 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* pp. 362, 363.

[87] Document No. 1.53 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, p. 241.

laws that were quite often incomprehensible."[88] Yet the Soviet authorities gave greater benefits to more people and much faster than their previous governments and believed this was enough to overcome resistance perceived by them as class struggle. The Communists attacked rebellions with the weapon they knew how to use best – the class war. Victory had to be gained through the escalation of class conflict, culminating in a social revolution directed from above, which would transform the counterinsurgency conducted by the state into a civil war. This strategy would force most borderland people to support the government against class enemies resisting the Soviet state under nationalist banners. It is debatable how important the class factor of this conflict was in every western region, but the objectives the party pursued by launching the reform were largely attained: It intensified social tensions, thus splitting the rural community and prompting some peasants to side with the government. However, the support for the authorities from the *bedniaks* was weaker and the resistance of other peasants greater than the Soviet administration had expected because several unpopular aspects of its agrarian policy tainted the positive image earned by the initial reform. Soviet radicalism was always more effective in its confiscatory than creative stages. The government viewed the benefits it gave to peasants by enforcing the agrarian reform as temporary, granted only until insurgency was defeated. It completed the whole cycle from agrarian reform to collectivization within a much shorter period in the western borderlands than it had in the old territories because this time the strategic goals and the path toward them seemed clear. The rush toward collectivization during 1944–1946 in western Ukraine, before the regime had established control over the countryside and without the funds necessary to sponsor it, was futile and disastrously counterproductive. Although few peasants were affected by it before 1947, many beneficiaries of the agrarian reform suspected, correctly, that the authorities would force them to the *kolkhozes* sooner or later and abstained from supporting the Communists. In the Baltic region, where party leaders resisted collectivization, the Soviet agrarian policy made a more positive impression, but the greater cultural difference between Balts and their Slavic superiors produced other strains absent in Ukraine. Already in December 1944, Klymentii Sheptyts'kyi, Archimandrite of the Uniate Church, informed the Soviet government that West Ukrainians were "terrified by the collective farms most of all. … If this element, the fear of collective farms as a factor threatening the welfare of peasants, is eliminated and the policy is clarified by legislative acts and propaganda, the Bandera movement would lose ground."[89] The government knew this, but it operated within the limits set by ideology and sought to accelerate a process it viewed as inevitable, progressive, and destined to benefit peasants and the state in the long

[88] Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 56.

[89] "Uniaty i sovetskaia vlast'," *Otechestvennye arkhivy* 3:64, 1994.

run. Collectivization and repressions against its most vocal opponents were inevitable. As a result, the hard-core nationalists succeeded in rallying behind them hundreds of thousands of peasants. These peasants, initially apolitical and apathetic, politicized under government pressure, which awakened their nationalist sentiments. The steady stream of peasant reinforcement prolonged the resistance despite the tremendous losses inflicted by the Soviet security forces.

Local leaders who argued that Moscow's universal class-based counterinsurgency model was outdated and attempted to adjust it to local conditions risked their careers. As Michael Shafer observes, "The reigning paradigm determines which explanations of the new data make sense. … Because everyone shares the same paradigm, it is seldom considered a possible source of failure. Instead, failure of a particular prescription is likely to provoke questions relating to its implementation."[90] If selective repressions of guerrilla families failed to destroy the resistance, the central government accused local authorities of "liberalism" and demanded the intensification of punitive measures but did not question the model. The propaganda image of the *kulak* as the enemy of the poor and therefore of Soviet authorities helped Communists to instigate social tensions, but it also shaped their own mentality. The oversimplified concept of the enemy, imposed by Moscow, prevented the security forces from impartial analysis of the insurgency's roots. In the Baltic region, the inaccurate perception of resistance as a class war eventually created precisely the opponents whom the Communists had expected to face, leaving them no option but to fight back. In western Ukraine, the class component of the conflict was secondary to its other aspects, but the Soviet leaders ignored data contradicting the theory. From the government point of view, the most important outcome of the agrarian policy was the fact that it won enough peasants to support the authorities during the crucial period of power struggle; the authorities interpreted the resistance to "the socialist mode of production" as a natural reaction of petty bourgeoisie, the poorest part of which had to be converted to the Communist cause and the wealthiest to be destroyed sooner or later, in battle or otherwise.

[90] D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 36.

6

Deportations, "Repatriations," and Other Types of Forced Migration as Aspects of Security Policy

Nado vyselit' s treskom! [Kick them out!]
– Stalin's note on the proposal of the Southern Front Headquarters to deport ethnic Germans[1]

For centuries, states have expelled parts of their populations to other regions within their borders or abroad, seeking to remove from areas threatened by a foreign or internal enemy those whose loyalty they questioned, to facilitate unpopular policies, or to seize lands for more favored groups. Mass deportations differ in principle from the exile of convicts. Convicts are sentenced for certain crimes to specific terms of exile after routine court procedures, whereas deportations are often preemptive, targeting not individuals but groups of *potential* troublemakers defined on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, or class, and victims usually are exiled forever by emergency decrees. Depending on the objectives and nature of the state, deportation could be more or less painful to its victims. In the nineteenth century, it was a routine colonial practice, and during World War I, many states exiled or interned citizens who shared ethnicity with enemy nations. Germany deported many Poles and Jews and planned to remove all Slavs from eastern frontier regions, Austria-Hungary expelled Serbs from occupied lands, and Canada interned recent immigrants from Austria-Hungary. In 1915, the Ottomans deported the Armenians who escaped slaughter from the Russian border to Syria. In the 1920s, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey exchanged diaspora populations to forestall security problems, and in the 1930s, the Nazis expelled Jews from Germany. During World War II, several Axis states, Vichy France, the United States, and Canada deported their citizens or those of conquered countries. Czechoslovakia had driven Sudeten Germans out by 1946; Israelis expelled Palestinians from the regions conquered during the Arab–Israeli war in 1948, and in response, the Arab countries forced out their citizens of Jewish origin. In the 1950s, the French colonial administration in Algeria and the British

[1] Vladimir Iampol'skii, "'*Nado vyselit' s treskom*,'" *Novoe vremia* 23, 1994.

one in Malaya moved peasants from guerrilla-infested regions to protected hamlets, as did the South Vietnamese government in the 1960s. In 1972, Idi Amin's regime banished all the Asian population from Uganda. During the civil war in Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Serbs attempted to cleanse Kosovo of Albanians, whereas Croats and Albanians, indirectly supported by NATO, forced Serbs to leave Croatia and Kosovo.

The Soviet Union deported more people than any other European state: about eight million from 1929 to 1952, including about a dozen ethnic groups and about 40 groups selected according to various criteria.[2] By 1 July 1952, 2,694,197 people were living in Soviet "special settlements": 769,484 men, 1,040,656 women, and 884,057 children.[3] This chapter analyzes different types of deportations and expulsions in the western borderlands: preemptive, retaliatory, those meant to facilitate amnesties or collectivization, those targeting the civilian base of guerrilla support, and those done for geopolitical reasons. It also discusses the effectiveness of Soviet deportations and other types of forced migrations as a pacification tool. The Soviet regime developed its deportation policy in the 1930s, and when it subsequently applied this policy to the borderlands, it relied mainly on the experience of the past, introducing only minor tactical innovations. GULAG instructions stated: "Exile is seldom practiced as a penalty for specific crimes – those are punished by confinement to [labor] camps. As a rule, exile is imposed on persons deemed dangerous due to their anti-Soviet contacts. … Court sentence is not a prerequisite for deportation."[4] Communist ideology limited deportations in some cases but escalated them in others. From the mid-1930s, most mass deportations in the old territories stemmed from a new trend in Soviet policy: ethnic-based decision making. They became indiscriminate and illogical by late 1943. In the western borderlands, however, deportations and expulsions remained selective and served as a means to enforce traditional Soviet security and social policies – to weed out internal enemies, real or imagined; reduce their civilian basis of support; destroy the "fifth column" of foreign powers; eliminate secessionist menaces; and enforce collectivization. Most deportations and expulsions were pragmatic actions of a state unrestrained in its coercive measures and facing an imminent foreign invasion, insurgency challenge, and secessionism.

By the time the Soviet Union incorporated neighboring states in 1939–1940, deportations had become a standard tool of its policy. The government used them extensively in the new territories in order to tighten security in the vulnerable frontier regions and advance certain social policies. The Soviet leaders expected to meet resistance in western Ukraine and Belorussia primarily from the Polish intelligentsia, army officers, landlords, and the *osadniks*. This

[2] Nikolai Bugai, ed., *Deportatsiia narodov Kryma* (Moscow: INSAN, 2002), p. 22; Gennadii Marchenko, "Deportatsiia," *Don* 4:213, 1998.

[3] Document No. 426 in Hilda Sabbo, ed. *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 1185.

[4] Document No. 412 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2, pp. 1158–1159.

expectation defined the primary target for deportations. The largest segment of the Polish deportees, the *osadniks,* began to be exiled in February 1940. By April, 139,590 of them were moved, mainly to Siberia.[5] On 5 March 1940, the government ordered the execution of 21,857 "former Polish officers, civil servants, landlords, policemen, spies, gendarmes, *osadniks,* and jail wardens" kept in Soviet prisoner-of-war camps. Three days earlier it had issued a directive about exile of their families.[6] These deportations drove an anti-Soviet segment of the population away from the frontier regions and helped the administration to accomplish a populist agrarian reform that distributed the lands of the Polish minority among the ethnic majorities of this region, Ukrainians and Belorussians, thus winning some popular support. The state combined ethnic, class, and previous record selection criteria in these deportations; most of the exiled were Poles, but they also had held most administrative positions and belonged to the wealthiest part of the population. The government also deported those who displayed a negative attitude toward the Soviet regime by attempting to move to the regions under German control but were not accepted by the Germans. Finally, it sent to the interior the refugees from the part of Poland occupied by Germany, among them, 58,852 Jews.[7] The authorities did not bother most Poles living in the western provinces and released almost all Polish deportees, 389,041 of 389,382, after the amnesty of 12 August 1941 that followed the Soviet-Polish alliance.[8] At the time, when the situation on the Eastern Front was desperate, the Soviets perceived these Poles as members of an allied nation.

The Soviet administration sought to win the hearts of ethnic majorities in the new territories and at first abstained from mass repressions against their members, although it knew about the nationalist underground, which it assumed, correctly, would side with Germany in case of war. As it turned out, the Soviet perception of the primary threat in the western borderlands was wrong: Ukrainian and Baltic nationalists were more dangerous than the Polish ones demoralized by the crushing defeat of their state. In the spring of 1941, reports about nationalist subversion increasingly swamped Soviet security agencies. In early April, the Soviet police found that the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was preparing an armed uprising to coincide with a German invasion. The *Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennikh del SSSR* (NKVD; People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) registered a considerable intensification of armed resistance in western Ukraine – 47 attacks in

[5] Document No. 107 in A. N. Dugin, ed., *Neizvestnyi GULAG* (Moscow: Nauka, 1999), p. 86.

[6] Document No. 73 in S. B. Stepashin, ed., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine,* Vol. 1, Book 1 (Moscow: Kniga i biznes, 1995–2000), p. 156; Nikolai Bugai, "Deportatsii naselennia z Ukrainy, 30–50ti roky," *UIZ* 10:35, 1990.

[7] Nikolai Bugai, "20–50-e gody: pereseleniia i deportatsii evreiskogo naseleniia v SSSR," *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 4:179, 1993.

[8] Beria, "Spravka Nr. 430 [Report no. 430]" (20 August 1941), GARF, f. 9479, op. 1, d. 116, ll. 3, 4; Beria to Stalin (1 May 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 64, l. 380.

April and 58 in May 1941, killing 98 and wounding 46 persons, mainly local activists. From 1 January to 15 June 1941, the police destroyed 38 nationalist guerrilla units and also 25 criminal gangs in western Ukraine with a total of 273 members. By 15 June, it was tracking 51 OUN armed bands with 274 members.[9] In March 1941, Latvian NKVD discovered the underground network run by the *Tevijas sargi* group. It was spying for Germany and preparing an armed uprising, which it launched after 22 June.[10] In May, a police agent penetrated the underground Lithuanian Defence Guard. Its orders stated:

> The uprising must start as soon as the German Army crosses the Lithuanian border. During the war between Germany and the USSR, members of the organization should perform the following functions: Arrest all commissars and other active Communists; disarm and arrest the Red police and GPU agents or liquidate them if they resist; … force all the Jews out of the country; … cut the telephone, telegraph and electrical wires but preserve the polls; destroy railways and roads in the Soviet rear.[11]

Meanwhile, the NKVD captured several members of the Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) and found that its leader, Kazys Škirpa, warned them: "Germany will attack the USSR in the spring of 1941. We, Lithuanians, should rise in the rear of the Red Army and carry out intensive sabotage destroying bridges, railways and [other] communication lines."[12] The Lithuanian provisional government wrote later: "A plan had been developed [before the German invasion] defining where and how partisans should act in case of war in order to facilitate the quickest advance of the German armed forces."[13] Thousands of LAF members rushed to fight the Soviets when Operation *Barbarossa* began.

With the increasing flow of intelligence about Axis armies concentrating on the Soviet frontiers, the government finally decided to deport

> (a) Active members of the counterrevolutionary parties and members of the anti-Soviet nationalist White-Guard organizations; (b) former gendarmes, high-rank policemen and jail wardens and also rank and file policemen and jail wardens against whom implicating evidence exists; (c) former large landlords and factory owners and high-rank civil servants … ; (d) former army officers … against whom implicating evidence exists; (e) criminal elements.[14]

On 22 May 1941, police exiled 11,329 persons from western Ukraine, followed on 13 June by 24,360 deportees from Moldova and Ukrainian Cherovtsy and Izmail provinces; on 14–17 June, by 10,187 Lithuanians, 9,546 Latvians, and 5,978 Estonians; and on 20 June, by 22,353 residents of Belorussia. Furthermore,

[9] Documents No. 181, 225, 249, and 253, in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Book 2, Vol. 1, pp. 85–87, 194, 234, 235, 240.

[10] Document No. 179, ibid., pp. 79–81.

[11] Document No. 238, ibid., pp. 215, 216. GPU was the name of the Soviet secret police before the formation of NKVD.

[12] Document No. 217, ibid., p. 163.

[13] "Memorandum of the Provisional Government of Lithuania" (1941), RVGA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, l. 12

[14] Document No. 207, in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 1, Book 2, p. 145.

the NKVD arrested 5,479 persons in Moldova and Cherovtsy and Izmail provinces, 5,664 Lithuanians, 5,625 Latvians, and 3,178 Estonians and 2,059 persons from Belorussia.[15] In Ukraine, some fugitives turned themselves in during the deportation to save their families. In response, the police released those who belonged to the poor peasantry, were OUN privates, and had committed no terrorist acts. It quickly realized, however, that these deportations would not wreck the OUN network. On 21 June, Vsevolod Merkulov, people's commissar of the state security, sanctioned another mass deportation of suspected OUN members and their families. The German invasion frustrated these plans. The police in the borderlands had no time to fulfill the next Merkulov directive of 25 June ordering the internment of all Italian, Finnish, Romanian, Hungarian, and Slovak citizens – those from the countries of the Axis alliance.[16]

Historians often portray these deportations as "indiscriminate mass terror,"[17] and some even claim that in the Baltic republics they were conducted "with the goal to free the Baltic region of its native population."[18] In fact, the Soviets never had such a goal, nor did they plan to colonize the borderlands with Russians. The total number of Russian incomers was small, only about 1,000 in the case of Latvia, and Latvians, rather than Russians, dominated the NKVD of this republic[19] and conducted the deportations. The Soviet purpose was obvious: to cleanse the frontier regions of a German "fifth column," as well as other "antisocial elements." Quite logically, from a class point of view, since Jews were overrepresented not only among the Communists but also among businessmen, they suffered proportionately more than other ethnic groups during these deportations: Jews constituted 12 percent of the Latvian deportees, although their proportion of the Latvian population was only about 5 percent. Similarly, the Soviets deported 8.3 percent of Estonia's Jewish population.[20] The government preemptively arrested all those who, in

[15] Documents No. 212 and 254, ibid., pp. 154, 155, 247; Documents No. 19–21 in V. I. Pasat, ed., *Trudnye stranitsy istorii Moldovy: 1940–1950-e gody* (Moscow: Terra, 1994), p. 165; Document No. 16 in N. I . Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), p. 44. The total number of deportees from the Baltic region in 1941 was slightly higher because some individuals were arrested and deported before 14 June. These deportees were not necessarily ethnic Balts but were residents of those regions. In total, 85,716 persons were exiled from the borderlands during these deportations; Document No. 274 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 1, p. 804.

[16] Documents No. 213 and 274 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 1, Book 2, pp. 155, 156, 297; Document No. 314 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 2, Book 1, p. 314.

[17] Rein Taagepera, *Estonia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), p. 67, Albertas Gerutis, ed., *Lithuania: 700 Years* (New York: Manyland Books, 1969), p. 286.

[18] Henriks Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands in den Jahren des Kommunismus (1940–1990)," *Acta Baltica* 29–30:90, 1991–1992.

[19] Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p. 43.

[20] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 40. The percentage of Jews deported from Estonia is calculated from Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States* (London: Hurst

its opinion, potentially could be disloyal. Holding the frontier regions for a short period, the authorities lacked the intelligence to make precise arrests. Instead, they identified potential enemies on the basis of class affiliation and previous record and treated diaspora nationalities with greater suspicion. Data on the "registered anti-Soviet and antisocial elements" compiled by the *Narodnyi komissariat gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti* (NKGB; People's Commissariat of State Security) on the eve of the deportations from the Baltic region, serving as a rough selection guide, reveal the distribution of different categories of victims (Table 6.1).

As becomes clear from this table, most deportees were various "class enemies" and their relatives. Although the latter, almost half the total, were not implicated in any political activities, the Soviets reasoned that they would support the opposition after the heads of their families had been exiled. Typically, the relatives of apolitical "antisocial elements" – criminals and prostitutes – were not deported because the Soviets did not expect them to engage in subversion.

A "fifth column" did exist in the borderlands – in fact, a Lithuanian underground group formed in 1940 in Mažeikiai and connected with LAF named itself "The Fifth Column."[21] OUN started armed resistance long before the German invasion, whereas the Baltic opposition prepared for an insurrection coinciding with a German attack, and after 22 June, its members who had escaped the police net did rise against the Soviets. The accuracy of the NKVD's definition of the fifth column is unclear, however. Inevitably, as in any mass deportation, many, perhaps most, deportees were innocent victims of social profiling; furthermore, Beria and Merkulov, heads of NKVD and NKGB, ordered the police first to arrest those on the blacklist, and only afterward did the NKVD Special College produce a legal justification for the arrests,[22] which ensured that a number of unintended victims rounded up by mistake were given prison terms. Yet the Soviet administration made an effort to select its targets. It did not exile the rank and file of national guards or medium-rank and junior police officers or even senior army officers against whom it had no evidence, although it knew most of them were anti-Soviet. Furthermore, the deportations partially hit the target. Lithuanian historians found that the resistance network "was somewhat impaired by the mass deportations of 14 June 1941," which "disrupted ties between leaders of the underground and even eliminated some key personalities."[23] Nijole Gaškaite-Žemaitiene attributes the poor organization

& Co, 1993), p. 61 and Vello Salo, ed., *Population Losses 1940–1941: Citizens of Jewish Nationality* (Tallinn: Johannes Esto Ühing, 2002), p. 3.

[21] Valentinas Brandišauskas, "Anti-Soviet Resistance in 1940 and 1941 and the Revolt of June 1941," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 2000), p. 14.

[22] Document No. 372 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2, p. 1039

[23] Zenonas Ivinskis, "Lithuania During the War," in V. Stanley Vardys, ed., *Lithuania Under the Soviets* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 65; Algirdas Budreckis, "Lithuanian Resistance, 1940–1952," in Gerutis, *Lithuania: 700 Years,* p. 322.

TABLE 6.1 *Data on "Registered Anti-Soviet and Antisocial Elements," June 1941*

	Lithuania		Latvia		Estonia		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Members of counterrevolutionary parties, and nationalist organizations	1,170	11.8	3,800	25.3	1,480	10.2	6,440	16.3
Former jail wardens, gendarmes, and senior police officers	868	8.7	585	3.9	670	4.6	2,123	5.4
Landlords, factory owners, and senior civil servants	1,925	19.4	919	6.1	2,100	14.5	4,944	12.5
Former officers [of the national armies] and Whites	284	2.9	316	2.1	425	2.9	1,025	2.6
Family members of the previous four categories	3,475	35.0	6,600	44.0	8,900	61.5	18,975	48.2
Criminals	1,288	13.0	2,180	14.5	691	4.8	4,159	10.6
Prostitutes	594	6.0	200	1.3	-	-	794	2.0
Others	320	3.2	400	2.7	215	1.5	935	2.4
Total	9,924	100	15,000	100	14,471	100	39,395	100

Source: Document No. 2.74 in Alexandr Iakovlev, ed., *Stalinskie deportatsii* (Moscow: Materik, 2005), p. 217.

of the Lithuanian underground on the eve of the German evacuation to the Soviet repressions during the first occupation.[24] Franz Stahlecker, commander of *Einsatzgruppe A,* complained that "it was much harder to stage pogroms in Latvia [than in Lithuania], mainly because the Soviets had deported the nationalist leaders."[25] The rear of the Red Army in the Estonian Petseri Province was quiet because the government deported most nationalists, including all those who knew the locations of numerous weapon depots organized by members of the *Kaitseliit*, which the Communists banned in June 1940.[26] Had the Red Army stopped the Axis close to the frontier, as Soviet leaders hoped, guerrilla warfare in its rear might have affected actions on the Eastern Front. As it turned out, the Axis advance was so swift that attacks by nationalist guerrillas had little military significance, whereas the deportations were the most unpopular Soviet action in the Baltic region. Western Ukrainians and Belorussians approved the exile of Poles, but deportations targeting a fifth column among titular nationalities provoked rumors that the Communists intended to exile the entire local population. The rumors had no factual basis, but they raised fears. These deportations strained relations between the authorities and populations of the western borderlands on the eve of the German attack and probably produced more enemies than they eliminated.

Along with deportations, the Soviet state continued practicing the least violent form of ethnic cleansing that it had begun in 1937, the forced "repatriation" of diaspora nationalities. After each Soviet conquest in 1939–1940, Germany and the USSR concluded treaties about the "repatriation" of Germans who found themselves within the new Soviet boundaries. They signed an agreement concerning the Germans in western Ukraine and Belorussia on 16 November 1939, those in northern Bukovina and Bessarabia on 5 September 1940, and those in the Baltic region on 10 January 1941. Many of those Germans admired the Nazis. In Bessarabia, Nazi organizations had existed legally in every German colony. The Soviet leaders had a valid reason to regard these Germans as the most probable members of a fifth column. The agreements stated that "repatriation is voluntary, and therefore, coercion cannot be applied directly or indirectly,"[27] but in practice both Germany and the Soviet Union regarded Germans who refused to repatriate as enemies and pressed them to leave. By 22 June 1941, 133,138 Germans were evacuated from Moldova alone.[28]

[24] Nijole Gaškaite-Žemaitiene, "The Partisan War in Lithuania from 1944 to 1953," in Anušauskas, *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States,* p. 27.

[25] G. G. Alov, "Palachi," *VIZ* 6:30, 1990.

[26] Peeter Kaasik and Mika Raudvassar, "Estonia from June to October 1941," in Toomas Hiio, Meelis Maripuu, and Indrek Paavle, eds., *Estonia 1940–1945* (Tallinn: Estonian Foundation for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006), p. 502.

[27] Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 1, Book 2, p. 19; Valerii I. Pasat, *Deportatsii s territorii Moldavskoi SSR 1940–1951* (Moscow, 1996), p. 48; Document No. 18 in Pasat, *Trudnye stranitsy istorii Moldovy,* p. 91.

[28] Pasat, *Deportatsii s territorii Moldavskoi SSR,* p. 93.

Ethnic deportations in the old territories intensified after the Axis invasion. They started with the exile of Soviet Germans and other nationalities sharing ethnicity with the enemy, but then the government deported also a dozen other minorities: Karachais, Kalmyks, Chechens, Ingushes, Balkars, Crimean Tatars, Crimean Bulgarians, Armenians, and Greeks, and Meskhetian Turks, Kurds, and Khemshins. These wholesale deportations began in August 1941 and peaked between October 1943 and November 1944. Once an ethnic group was officially stigmatized, all its members had to be exiled and their previous record ignored. The government's claims that the exiled minorities were less loyal than an average Soviet ethnic group within the pre-1939 borders had foundation in some cases but were groundless in other. In any case, even if the official justification that these minorities were punished for treason is taken for granted, it is difficult to find a rationale for diverting manpower and other resources from the war effort to the deportations conducted in deep rear regions, only some of which had experienced rebellions. In fact, the real goal of this policy was assimilation of ethnic groups blacklisted for various reasons, among which the alleged anti-Soviet resistance was sometimes only a minor factor. This new assimilation strategy could be more easily justified if the stigmatized nationalities were accused of treason and exiled under wartime emergency decrees.[29]

In the western borderlands, conversely, the government never planned wholesale ethnic cleansing, although some borderland residents expected it after the Germans published a forged directive, allegedly issued by the Soviet authorities and intercepted by the Germans, ordering the deportation of all Ukrainians.[30] When the Soviets returned in 1944, they began selective deportations that pursued two major goals: to eliminate opposition and to facilitate collectivization. Small-scale but frequent deportations of guerrilla relatives and alleged supporters preceded the mass exile of wealthy farmers on the eve of collectivization. Soviet leaders assumed, correctly, that guerrilla families "represented the major accomplice and shelter for the bourgeois-nationalist bands," the core of the civilian infrastructure on which they relied.[31] From the Soviet point of view, the deportation of these civilian sympathizers was a rational means to destroy this infrastructure without resorting to extreme violence, to separate insurgent rank and file from the hard core, and to make the former accept amnesty.

Nikita Khrushchev, the greatest promoter of deportations among the leaders of the western republics, told Stalin of his intention to start them in

[29] Alexander Statiev, "The Nature of Anti-Soviet Armed Resistance, 1942–1944: The North Caucasus, the Kalmyk Autonomous Republic, and Crimea," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6(2):285–318, 2005.

[30] Document No. 2F in Aleksandr Iakovlev, ed., *Stalinskie deportatsii* (Moscow: Materik, 2005), pp. 787, 788.

[31] Suslov, "Otchet o rabote buro TsK VKP(b) po Litve [Report of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania]" (July 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, l. 20.

March 1944, when the Soviets had reoccupied only part of western Ukraine. The next month, the first deportations began.[32] Ukrainians, like most other deportees, were exiled mainly to Siberia and the Russian European North, but some simply were relocated within the same province at a considerable distance from their place of residence.[33] The police developed great skill in this job. Before the action, they registered all prospective deportees. Security troops encircled an entire region at night, turned off the telephone network, and began operations at dawn simultaneously in all villages. The police could round up and load into trains tens of thousands of people within one day. The deportations in Ukraine remained, however, haphazard until 10 January 1945, when Khrushchev issued the directive "Intensification of the Struggle against the Ukrainian-German Nationalists," proposing a strategy that soon proved effective. In essence, he ordered the police to use the methods Tukhachevsky had employed during the suppression of the Tambov rebellion in 1921. The police should

> complete a census of the population from 15 years old up in the rural regions of the West Ukrainian provinces. … The census must establish the exact whereabouts of every man and woman. The relatives of the persons whose exact location is unknown should sign a declaration stating that if these persons fail to report to the Soviet authorities, they will be regarded as bandits and their families will be prosecuted – arrested or deported. … Retaliation must follow every bandit attack: The families of bandits and *kulaks* who provide the bandits any help must be promptly exiled.[34]

This directive led to deportations of guerrilla relatives every year. Khrushchev played his cards with an open hand, warning guerrillas in advance of imminent repressions against their families, and took the considerable but calculated risk that this threat would bring people out of the forests rather than drive them in. As he explained, "The population should be afraid of our retaliations rather than them [UPA]."[35] After the police completed the census, it began systematically to deport guerrilla families, including those whose missing members had been arrested or killed by the security forces. Their property was confiscated and distributed among victims of the nationalists, demobilized Soviet soldiers, and *bedniak* and *seredniak* loyalists. A Ukrainian party inspector reported to Khrushchev: "The census of the population and the deportation of bandits' relatives were extremely effective in facilitating the exit of bandits out of the forests and their voluntary surrender." Another official wrote: "Of course, the deportation of [guerrillas'] families is not a goal but a means for the promptest eradication of banditry, but I must say that this means is most effective."[36] Furthermore, a provincial party secretary was pleased to report

[32] N. Khrushchev to Stalin (March 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 703, l. 18.
[33] Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), pp. 323, 324.
[34] "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 3:103–104, 1995.
[35] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 260.
[36] Kobeliatskii, instructor of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party, to Khrushchev, "Spravka o khode vypolneniia resheniia TsK KP(b)U [The

that "a great many people strive to acquire bandits' homes and property." He expected that this would attract class allies and intensify the tensions between them and guerrillas.[37]

Some functionaries maintained, again tacitly accepting Tukhachevsky's method, that entire villages where many people had joined the guerrillas or supported them had to be exiled.[38] In fact, such indiscriminate deportations were exceptional. Having identified the guerrillas' families, the authorities exiled only some of them and threatened to deport the rest in retaliation for nationalists' attacks. If guerrillas killed a significant official, like a district party secretary, all the families of insurgents in that district were deported.[39] Every peasant knew that in case of a guerrilla attack, several villagers would be exiled. This was a powerful deterrent.

Of course, the police interpreted the term *guerrilla accomplice* quite inclusively, extending it to those who knew about the location of guerrillas or their bunkers but did not report on them; it exiled many people by mistake, or because they were wealthy farmers wrongly associated with resistance, or because local officials sought to fill deportation quotas set by their superiors. The police expected that they would be unable to apprehend all the marked families, and in advance they selected "a reserve," families whose deportation was deemed unnecessary but who were to replace the escapees to fill the quotas. In October 1947, when the state launched the largest mass deportation in western Ukraine, exiling 77,791 persons, the police reported that "many families whose deportation had been sanctioned were dropped out because their [missing] relatives were in fact serving in the Red Army."[40] Many other such families were less lucky. Latvian and Estonian *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del* (MVD; Ministry of Internal Affairs) officers complained that their *Ministerstvo gosuradstbennoi bezopasnosti* (MGB; Ministry of State Security) rivals ignored their requests to exclude persons blacklisted by mistake, "being interested only in filling the quotas," because MGB superiors demanded "fulfilment of the plan, and, if possible, its overfulfilment at the

fulfilment of the directive of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (18 March 1945),. TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1695, l. 32; S. Oleksenko, secretary of the Drogobych Provincial Party Committee, to Khrushchev, "O reagirovanii naseleniia i banditov na vyselenie semei banditov [Reaction of the population and the bandits to the eviction of bandit families]" (27 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1695, l. 328.

[37] Documents No. 103 and 105 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), pp. 455, 461, 465.

[38] Document No. 3 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), p. 577.

[39] Beria to Stalin (14 March 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 64, l. 172; Document No. 56 in "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 3:110, 1995; Documents No. 3 and 14 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 708–711, 789–791.

[40] Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* p. 150; Colonel Mikhailov, commander of the 62nd MGB Rifle Division, "Donesenie [Report]" (21 October 1947), PC, reel 175, p. 223; Ivan Bilas, *Repesyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini 1917–1953,* Vol. 1 (Kyiv: Lybid', 1994), p. 284.

expense of the reserve."[41] When the police of Lithuanian Raseiniai Province found out that 10 of the 40 families blacklisted for deportations had fled, they simply exiled 10 other families whose deportation was not planned.[42] Against this, a party inspector noted that authorities sometimes hesitated to deport even those against whom they had strong evidence: "During the operation in Kliuchi-Velikie Village, a bandit shot out of a house, wounded a frontier guard in the hand and fled. The District Prosecutor Damirov refused to authorize the arrest and deportation of the family where the bandit was hiding, stating that we had first to find out more about the family. Measures were taken only after [my] intervention." OUN reports confirm that the overwhelming majority of those deported in retaliation were indeed relatives of guerrillas.[43]

In order to be effective, a threat must be publicly known, pervasive, and personalized, and the actions enforcing this threat must be prompt, necessary, minimal under the given circumstances, proportionate to the crimes, and established by law.[44] Although the Soviet authorities inevitably made mistakes when they identified guerrilla families, these particular deportations, coupled with the offer of amnesty to those who surrendered, corresponded to these criteria more than deportations of other types, and they attained the desired goals. The threat to exile their relatives brought from the forests many unenthusiastic insurgents: peasants who had been drafted by guerrillas or had joined them in desperation while hiding from conscription to the Red Army. In fact, this pressure saved thousands of such peasants from slaughter (Table 6.2).

As the Bolsheviks had done during the civil war, the police interned families with absent members in the district centers for a while before deportation, giving the fugitives another opportunity to change their minds. If they surrendered, the authorities released their families and amnestied guerrilla privates uninvolved in atrocities. In Drogobych Province, of 2,557 families interned by 20 March 1945, 1,356 were released after the fugitives surrendered.[45] The deportations of guerrilla families and suspected accomplices prompted civilians sympathetic to the nationalists to think before helping the insurgents. After the police deported 14,535 suspected guerrilla supporters from western

[41] Document No. 372 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2, p. 1039; Document No. 20 in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii,* p. 655.

[42] Document No. 5.14 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m,* Vol. 2 (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), p. 187.

[43] Galich, instructor of the Organizer and Instructor Section of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party, to Khrushchev, "Spravka o khode vypolneniia resheniia TsK KP(b)U [Report on the fulfilment of the directive of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (February 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1697, l. 5; Documument No. 15 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 603–617.

[44] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 141.

[45] Oleksenko, secretary of the Drogobych Party Provincial Committee, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (27 March 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1695, l. 79.

TABLE 6.2 *Proportion of the Ukrainian Families Who Turned in Their Missing Relatives from 10 January to 10 June 1945*

Province	Number of Warned Families	Number of Families Who Turned in Their Guerrilla Relatives	Percentage of Families Who Turned in Their Guerrilla Relatives
Rovno	7,152	2,301	32.2
Drogobych	4,806	2,246	46.7
Ternopol	4,121	2,116	51.3
Stanislav	6,553	3,991	60.9
Volyn'	2,232	1,799	80.6
Lvov	6,718	5,844	87
Chernovtsy	4,022	4,010	99.7

Source: Calculated from "Svedeniia o iavke s povinnoi banditov [Report on the surrender of bandits]" (10 January–10 June 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1739, l. 229. An extremely high proportion of families that turned in their fugitive members in some provinces raises doubts about credibility of the police claims. However, in Lvov Province, which had a large Polish population, many of the fugitives may have been Poles who hid in the forests but did not plan to fight Soviets and surrendered more readily when the authorities pressed their relatives. Nationalists had the weakest support in Chernovtsy Province with well-mixed Ukrainian, Romanian, and Jewish populations. Most fugitives were draft evaders and UPA conscripts who were reluctant to fight. While the absolute numbers in this table should be taken with a grain of salt, they probably reflect the relative dynamics of surrender in various provinces with sufficient accuracy.

Ukraine between July and October 1947, it noticed "the attitude of the local population toward the bandits [had] changed; they refuse[d] to help the bandits with supplies and shelter them."[46]

The Lithuanian government regularly exiled relatives of the guerrillas, starting in the summer of 1945. Until 1948, it attempted to limit the police appetite for deportations. In June 1945, the NKVD asked permission to exile 20,000 guerrilla relatives, but the government cut the quota to 5,479 persons that year, 2,082 the next, and 3,938 in 1947. During the next two years, the deportations intensified. Between 1941 and 1952, the authorities deported 120,924 persons from Lithuania.[47] Besides guerrilla relatives, the state exiled those it regarded as "socially dangerous elements": former politicians regardless of affiliation, high-ranking civil servants, leaders of the national guard and the youth leagues, German collaborators, criminals, but above all, wealthy farmers, whose deportations in the Baltic region considerably exceeded the deportations of families whose members had joined the resistance (Table 6.3).

[46] Brovkin, commander of the 64th NKVD Rifle Division, "Obzor operativno-boevoi i sluzhebnoi deiatel'nosti 64 sd [Overview of the actions of the 64th Rifle Division]" (October 1947), PC, reel 173, p. 243.

[47] Document No. 5.2 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, pp. 148, 149.

TABLE 6.3 *Deportations from Lithuania, 1945–1952*

	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	Total
Kulak families, %	24.2	–	58.6	43.9	81.9	73.1	78.0	81.9	61.4
Families of guerrillas and other members of the political opposition, %	59.1	100	41.4	43.3	18.1	26.9	19.4	18.1	32.4
Others, %	16.7	–	–	12.8	–	–	2.6	–	6.2
Total number of persons	5,479	2,082	3,938	39,482	32,735	1,355	20,357	2,934	108,362

Source: Calculated from Document No. 5.1 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, pp. 148, 149.

As in 1929–1933, the authorities exiled wealthy farmers in order to eliminate resistance to collectivization and confiscate enough property to sustain it. In November and December of 1947, on the eve of mass collectivization in western Ukraine, 77,791 peasants were deported from there, and in 1948–1949, 20,702 "bandits and bandit accomplices from *kulak* families" were exiled from Estonia, 42,133 from Latvia, and 34,240 from Moldova. Most of them were sent to Siberian coal mines and the lumber industry.[48] In the western borderlands, the government hit *kulaks* particularly hard because it identified them with insurgents and viewed their deportation as integral to pacification. Constrained by this party-imposed dogma, the police also had to view the opponents of the Soviet system through the prism of ideology that distorted the actual nature of insurgency. V. Kiselev, deputy people's commissar of the Estonian NKVD, wrote in October 1945: "Class struggle began intensifying progressively and reached its peak during the summer months. Most registered bandit attacks are an obvious *kulak*-terrorist revenge against party and community activists and administrators."[49] Official documents on the deportations of 1947 in Ukraine and of 1948–1949 in other borderlands claimed to have targeted "nationalist and bandit families," but actually, most deportees were *kulaks* regarded by Communists as *a priori* guerrilla supporters. This is why deportations peaked during these years compared with 1944–1946, when the state indeed exiled mainly families of insurgents (Table 6.4).

Party secretaries reported that "the positive result of this operation [deportation] is … mass joining of *kolkhozes*" by peasants. In November 1947, 20,000 farmers were exiled from Lvov Province during Operation *Zapad,* the

[48] "Meropriiatiia po vyseleniiu iavlialis' chrezvychainoi meroi," *Istochnik* 1:138, 1996; Janis Riekstins et al., eds. *Represeto saraksts,* Vol. 1 (Riga: Latvijas Arhivi, 1995), p. 3. Document No. 134 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* p. 384. The major target of these deportations also was the *kulaks*.

[49] Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* p. 446.

TABLE 6.4 *Number of "Nationalist and Bandit" Family Members Deported from Western Ukraine*

1944	1945	1946	1947	Total, 1944–1947
12,762	17,497	6,350	77,791	114,400

Source: Documents No. 4.3 and 4.4 in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii,* pp. 628, 631.

first large postwar deportation from Ukraine. The remaining peasants stampeded to file applications for collective farms. On 15 October, the province had only one *kolkhoz;* a month later, 220.[50] In Estonia, the proportion of collectivized farms jumped from 16 percent on the eve of the mass deportation in March 1949 to 69 percent by 1 May – this was the highest collectivization rate in the Baltic region.[51]

This strategy, imposed by the center, conflated two different policies – counterinsurgency and collectivization. To deport guerrilla families was a rational means of counterinsurgency. Exile of wealthy peasants facilitated collectivization but fueled rebellion because those defined as *kulaks* had no choice but deportation or resistance. They could not avoid deportation by joining collective farms because party orders prohibited the acceptance of *kulaks* in *kolkhozes*.[52] The proportion of wealthy farmers among deportees rose steadily because the state repressed them regardless of their attitude toward the guerrillas (Table 6.5). Pacification and exile of the *kulaks* in the framework of collectivization were conflicting policies, but Soviet leaders did not regard them as such because they believed that by deporting the *kulaks,* they were simultaneously destroying the basis of support for guerrillas and opposition to collectivization.

The anti-*kulak* campaign was a war of annihilation. By 1947, wealthy farmers uninvolved in resistance were more likely to be deported than poor peasants known to be supporting the guerrillas. Thousands of them joined the insurgents without waiting to be evicted. In Riga Province, 30 percent of Latvian men marked for deportation went in hiding, whereas in Estonia, 5,719 persons, or about a quarter of the blacklisted people, escaped.[53] The

[50] Document No. 15 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 602; Grushetskii to Kaganovich, "Dokladnaia zapiska o rezul'tatakh bor'by s banditizmom vo L'vovskoi oblasti [Report on the fight against banditry in the Lvov Province]" (19 November 1947), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 2, d. 121.

[51] Rein Taagepera, "Western Awareness of Soviet Deportations in Estonia," in Kristi Kuuk and Toivo Raun, eds., *Soviet Deportations in Estonia: Impact and Legacy* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2007), p. 120.

[52] Diana Bleiere, "Repressions against Farmers in Latvia in 1944–1953," in Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 245; Document No. 4.21 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, p. 132.

[53] Document No. 146 in Elmars Pelakus, ed., *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia* (Riga: Nordik, 1999), p. 302; Mart Laar, "The March 1949 Deportations and the Armed Resistance Movement," in Kuuk and Raun, *Soviet Deportations in Estonia,* p. 98.

TABLE 6.5 *Economic Profile of Deportees in Lithuania: Steadily Increasing Proportion of* Kulaks

	December 1947–15 April 1948		22–27 May 1948		25 March–3 May 1949	
	Number of Families	Percentage	Number of Families	Percentage	Number of Families	Percentage
Kulaks	602	58.9	8,385	73.9	7,763	81.7
Seredniaks	354	34.6	2,388	21	1,417	14.9
Bedniaks	43	4.2	256	2.3	205	2.1
Other	23	2.3	316	2.8	122	1.3
Total	1,022	100	11,345	100	9,503 [*sic*]	100

Source: Antanas Tyla, ed., *Lietuvos gyventoju tremimai 1940–1941, 1945–1953 metais sovietines okupacines valdzios dokumentuose* (Vilnius: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1995), p. 123. These data might not reflect exact economic profiles because the police could register as *kulaks* anyone who resisted collectivization.

proportion of prosperous farmers among guerrillas and deportees rose steadily not only because the state repressed them regardless of their attitude toward the resistance but also because other guerrillas became disillusioned about the prospects of victory and abandoned the struggle. In the Baltic region, the anti-*kulak* campaign transformed resistance from an amorphous cross-class movement to one dominated by prosperous farmers.

Paradoxically, in Ukraine, where wealthy peasants formed only a small fraction of the resistance, they were persecuted more harshly than in the Baltic region, where their proportion among the guerrillas was far greater. This happened because Khrushchev sincerely believed in Stalin's theory about the intensification of class struggle, whereas many top Baltic leaders refused to see the deportation of guerrilla families and *kulaks* as two sides of the same coin. They questioned the wisdom of mass repressions against wealthy peasants and attempted to mitigate this policy. When the center decided to cleanse Lithuania of *kulaks,* it issued an ambiguous order, worded in the typical style of Soviet directives, with several possible interpretations, of which the addressee was expected to choose the most radical. This let bureaucrats take credit for implacability but blame their subordinates for "excesses" if the party line defined by Stalin suddenly veered elsewhere. On 21 February 1948, the central government ordered Lithuania to deport "bandit accomplices – *kulaks* with their families," expecting it to launch mass deportations of all *kulaks*. However, Lithuanian leaders deported only "the families of *kulaks* who supported the bandits." Moscow was forced to clarify its position by demanding that all "*kulaks* with their families and bandit families" be deported.[54] The Lithuanian government complied, and during the following three years, deportations of *kulak* families peaked. These deportations continued until 1952.

[54] Tyla, *Lietuvos gyventoju tremimai,* pp. 345, 377, 480, 598, 599.

When the government deported *kulaks* during collectivization in the old territories, it planned to keep them in exile for five years to be reeducated on the construction sites of communism and then returned to society. In the borderlands, however, the term of exile was determined only for some deportees. Those arrested in the spring of 1941 had to serve 5 to 8 years in labor camps and then remain in exile for 20 more years. Their families were exiled for 20 years. From 1947 through April 1948, the state exiled Lithuanians for 10 years, whereas during the Lithuanian deportations of 1945–1946 and May 1948, it did not set a definite term.[55] On 24 November 1948, the government stated that all the deportees had to stay in exile "forever, without the right to return to their former place of residence. Unwarranted leave (escape) from the places of their obligatory settlement will be regarded as a crime punishable with 20 years of hard labor."[56]

Soviet leaders liked how they solved the prewar problem of Germans in the western borderlands by "repatriating" them. In the last year of the war, they decided to cleanse other diaspora ethnic groups in the same way. Several million Poles lived in the western regions. Most were anti-Communist; besides, Soviet leaders worried that the Polish government in exile might use them as an argument for the return of the disputed provinces during peace negotiations. In September 1944, the Soviet Union and the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PCNL) agreed to exchange the Polish population of western Ukraine, Belorussia, and Lithuania for the Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Lithuanians residing in eastern Poland. As in 1940–1941, the "repatriation" was voluntary on paper and semiobligatory in practice. At first, the Soviets sought to encourage Poles to repatriate by making the process as painless as possible, canceling all their debts, pressing PCNL to give credits for the building of new homes, and letting the repatriates take along property of up to two tons per family. State committees assessed the property they were leaving behind and partially compensated its value. The Soviet bureaucracy usually demanded that people write piles of paper for insignificant requests, but in this case, it accepted even oral applications for repatriation and demanded no proof of citizenship from any Pole or Polish Jew willing to emigrate.[57]

[55] Document No. 207, in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 1, Book 2, p. 145; Document No. 11 in Eugenijus Grunskis, ed., *Lietuvos gyventoju tremimai 1940–1941, 1945–1953 metais* (Vilnius: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1996), p. 198.

[56] Nikolai Bugai and Askarbi M. Gonov, *Kavkaz: narody v eshelonakh* (Moscow: Insan, 1998), p. 235.

[57] Directive of the VKP(b) CC "O poriadke pereseleniia v Pol'shu byvshikh pol'skikh grazhdan pol'skoi i evreiskoi natsional'nostei [Resettlement of former Polish citizens of Polish and Jewish background to Poland]" (9 November 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 105, ll. 63, 64; "Vypiska iz soglasheniia mezhdu pravitel'stvami Belorusskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki i PKNO [Excerpt from the agreement between the Belorussian government and PCNL]" (1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 68, l. 84; RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 1, l. 49.

However, most Poles refused to leave their homes, believing the Western Allies would make the USSR return the disputed lands to Poland. Dissatisfied with the pace of "voluntary repatriation," the party leaders forced Poles to reconsider. They ordered factory managers to dismiss the Poles and the police to take passports from those who were laid off and harass the rest, depriving them of food rations and authorization for residences.[58] The NKVD suggested the arrest of 500 most influential Poles resisting "repatriation." In letters intercepted by the police, Poles complained that the Soviets first "told us that this [repatriation] was voluntary, but now they threaten us with Siberia."[59]

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Ukrainians preferred to stay in Poland because some of those who had "repatriated" fled back and, so said an official from the Resettlement Committee, "spread all possible lies and slander about the collective farms and the welfare of the repatriates. Besides, the Ukrainian population that remains in Poland receives letters from resettled [persons] who do not recommend repatriation." When Soviet officials promoting repatriation came to Dobro-Shlekhtskoe Village in Poland, populated mainly by refugees from Volhynia, the peasants said: "We know what you are doing there, and we have had enough of it. We had lived well here before you came, and we will live even better if you don't come again."[60] The UPA sought to frustrate repatriation because Polish territory bordering with Ukraine was its only safe haven, but only as long as Ukrainians lived there. It assassinated members of repatriating committees, destroyed the railways, and burned the property of those who agreed to resettle. Soviet officials observed that in four Polish provinces, only a negligible part of the Ukrainians agreed to resettle, whereas in Liskovski Province, none of 11,000 Ukrainian families wanted to repatriate.[61] On 22 August 1945, the Polish government demanded that Ukrainian farmers immediately pay all their debts and warned that those

[58] Mikhail Suslov, head of VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, "Protokol Nr. 3 [Protocol no. 3]" (24 January 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 32, 33; Directive of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party, "O khode evakuatsii grazhdan pol'skoi natsional'nosti [Evacuation of Poles]" (25 May 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 1, l. 116.

[59] "Spravka o meropriiatiiakh po usileniiu bor'by s banditizmom v Litovskoi SSR [The steps aimed at intensification of the fight against banditry in Lithuania]" (12 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 11; N. Khrushchev, *Vremia, liudi, vlast'*, Vol. 1 (Moscow: Moskovskie novosti, 1999), p. 822.

[60] Kal'nenko, deputy representative of the Ukrainian Government in charge of evacuation (7 November 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1472, l. 146; Kal'nenko to Korotchenko "Dokladnaia zapiska ob evakuatsii ukrainskogo naseleniia s territorii Pol'shi [Report on the evacuation of the Ukrainians from Poland]." TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1470, l. 243.

[61] Leont'ev to Riasnoi, "Soobshcheniie [Report]" (30 March 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 570, ll. 329–331; Leont'ev to Riasnoi, "Soobshcheniie [Report]" (14 May 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 573, ll. 81–84; N. Podgornyi, representative of the Ukrainian Government in charge of evacuation, "O vypolnenii soglasheniia ot 9.09.44 [Implementation of the agreement of 9.09.44]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1472, l. 157; Kal'nenko to Korotchenko "Dokladnaia zapiska ob evakuatsii ukrainskogo naseleniia," l. 240.

refusing repatriation would be resettled in the Polish interior. This pressure bore fruit, and thousands of Ukrainians applied for repatriation.[62]

By November 1946, 782,582 Poles had "repatriated" from Ukraine and 231,152 from Belorussia. In return, the Soviet Union received 482,109 Ukrainians and 35,961 Belorussians. Most of the Ukrainians, 75.4 percent, were settled outside Ukraine, where their possible opposition to the authorities was unimportant. The population exchange between Poland and Lithuania was one way. By November 1946, 169,244 Poles moved from Lithuania. The Soviets planned to bring 5,000 Lithuanians from Poland, but only 14 of them agreed.[63] On 28 March 1947, the Soviet and Polish governments launched Operation *Wisla,* another repatriation of Ukrainians from Poland and the deportation of the rest to northern Polish provinces. By August 1947, 140,600 Ukrainians were forced to move to the Soviet Union.[64]

In 1945, the Soviet Union annexed Transcarpathian Ukraine, formerly a province of Czechoslovakia, and incorporated in into Soviet Ukraine. Neither Czechs nor Slovaks resisted the Soviets, but Stalin preferred to forestall another potential territorial dispute by expelling these diaspora minorities. On 10 May 1946, the Soviet and Czechoslovak governments concluded a treaty of repatriation. By 15 March 1947, 35,690 Czechs and Slovaks were registered as prospective repatriates; it is unknown how many of them actually were expelled. Finally, the Soviets forced out 103,500 Germans from former East Prussia to East Germany, and they also pressed Jews who had been Romanian citizens before the incorporation of northern Bukovina and Bessarabia to emigrate to Romania.[65] The exchange of diaspora ethnic groups was to enforce Soviet claims to the disputed territories and eliminate a potential secessionist menace.

The Soviets realized that most nationalist guerrillas were young males, and they considered how to drain this pool of guerrilla recruits. Conscription into the Red Army was an obvious means toward this goal, and it was morally less painful than deportation. Although evasion was common in the borderlands, and some draft dodgers joined the guerrillas, most eligible men still showed up for mobilization: In Lithuania, 139,861 of 185,509 recruits reported. The conscription did deprive the resistance of manpower, whereas soldiers drafted in the borderlands were impressed with the might of the Red Army and returned home as Soviet loyalists.[66] The demobilization of the Red Army after the

[62] Podgornyi, "O vypolnenii soglasheniia ot 9.09.44," l. 159.

[63] Calculated from Kruglov to Stalin (31 October 1946), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 139; "Spravka o repatriatsii poliakov iz Litovskoi SSR v Pol'shu [Repatriation of Poles from Lithuania to Poland]" (no date), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 1, l. 47; Bilas, *Repesyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini,* Vol. 1, p. 231; Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii,* p. 616.

[64] Bilas, *Represyvno-karal'na systema,* Vol. 1, pp. 235, 236.

[65] Kruglov to Stalin (22 March 1947), GARF, f.9401, op.2, d.168, l.497; Kruglov to Molotov (31 December 1945), GARF, f.9401, op.2, d.105, l.400; Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii,* 618; Bugai, "Deportatsii naselennia z Ukrainy, 30–50ti roky," *UIZh,* 11: 1990, 23.

[66] Soblis, military commissar of Lithuania, "Spravka o khode prizyva v Litovskoi SSR [Report on conscription in Lithuania]" (1 December 1944), RVGA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, l. 55;

victory over Germany continued until 1948, but the government ordered it to discharge party and Komsomol members who came from the borderlands earlier, in the summer of 1945, to strengthen the Soviet administration and militia in the countryside.[67] These loyalists constituted a large proportion of the Soviet security forces that fought nationalist guerrillas.

The Ukrainian government attempted to remove young people ineligible for military service from the western provinces by introducing a labor draft to the Donbass mines and other industries. This policy, initiated by Khrushchev, aimed to make up for a labor deficit in industry and undermine the civilian infrastructure of the Ukrainian and Polish resistance movements. The authorities practiced labor draft under wartime decrees in the eastern regions too. Unlike deportees, drafted laborers preserved all civil rights. However, the draft still resembled the hated conscriptions for work in Germany; it was extremely unpopular, and most young men evaded it. Security agencies believed that this measure was counterproductive. In the summer of 1944, Moscow forbade the draft, but Khrushchev attempted to resume it in 1948, that time to Donbass technical schools. The result was the same: Of 3,500 eligible young men in Stanislav Province, 2,759, or 78.8 percent, fled to the forests, after which the authorities canceled the draft. The Ukrainian leaders sporadically pressed natives of western provinces to "voluntarily resettle" to eastern Ukraine until 1951, but this campaign generally failed because Moscow gave it no support.[68] The governments of other western republics did not practice this measure.

Authors of the Cold War era and Baltic historians of the post-Communist period typically interpret the forced migrations in the western borderlands as "a deliberate genocidal policy," a war against the local ethnic groups.[69] Their conclusions are based on three arguments: the scale of the deportations, the increasing "Russianization" and colonization of the western provinces, and the assumption that most or a very large part of the deportees died. Without access to primary sources during the Soviet era, they relied on rough estimates taken from nationalist publications and rumors. Statistics on deportations are important because they illuminate the goals behind them. When the Soviet archival data became available, they showed that the earlier

"Klim,:" "Informatyvnyi zvit z bil'shovits'koi diinosti [Report of the Bolsheviks' actions]" (30 August 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 926, ll. 53.

[67] Document No. 1.1 in Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, p. 116.

[68] Document No. 47 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996), p. 418; Pavel Sudoplatov, *Spetsoperatsii* (Moscow: Olma-Press, 1999), pp. 415, 416; Document No. 13 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 6, p. 107; Document No. 37 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7, p. 244.

[69] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 73; Adolfas Damušis, *Lithuania against Soviet and Nazi Aggression* (New York: American Foundation for Lithuanian Research, 1998), p. 212; Gerutis, *Lithuania: 700 Years,* pp. 284, 286; Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk, *UPA Warfare in Ukraine* (New York: Society of Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army of the United States and Canada, 1972), p. 36; Lauri Mälksoo, "Soviet Genocide? Communist Mass Deportations in the Baltic States and International Law," in Kuuk and Raun, *Soviet Deportations in Estonia,* p. 82; Taagepera, "Western Awareness of Soviet Deportations in Estonia," p. 124.

authors had greatly inflated the scale of the forced migrations. Having read Soviet primary sources, Jan Gross found that Polish historians exaggerated the number of persons deported or arrested in western Ukraine and Belorussia by about 300–400 percent.[70] Rein Taagepera also admits that he inflated the scale of deportations from Estonia by 250–300 percent before archival information became available, although he insists that such an exaggeration made only a "marginal" difference in the interpretation of deportations.[71] Such a discrepancy between internal police data and rough nationalist estimates emerges with every deportation.[72] In fact, deportations from the borderlands were comparable per capita with those in the old territories, whose major victims were ethnic Russians. In 1930–1933, when the Soviet government conducted collectivization in the old territories, it uprooted 3.6 million peasants, or about 2.4 percent of the 150 million Soviet population. In addition, it ordered in 1937 the extrajudicial execution of 47,000 of those belonging to the notorious "first category" of the repressed *kulaks* – those perceived as most hostile to the authorities.[73] In 1948–1952, during collectivization and postcollectivization repressions in Lithuania that was hit proportionately harder than any other western republic, the government deported 96,863 persons, or 3.8 percent of the 2,570,000 population of the republic.[74] Collectivization in the old territories caused little armed resistance, whereas in Lithuania the anti-Soviet insurgency was fierce. It is safe to assume that had collectivization in the old territories caused similar resistance, the proportion of exiled persons would have been the same. In Latvia 2.3 percent and in western Ukraine 2.2 percent of the population was deported during collectivization,[75] numbers that are slightly lower than the proportion of peasants exiled in 1930–1933 in the Soviet Union. The number of fatalities per capita during collectivization in the western borderlands was far lower than in the old territories because the Communist parties of the western regions allowed no extrajudicial executions of *kulaks,* and the death rate among *kulaks* deported from the borderlands was much lower than that of their counterparts exiled during collectivization in the old territories. The communists regarded wealthy peasants as a class enemy, attacking them whatever their ethnicity. People of the borderlands suffered from Soviet deportations no more than those in the old territories.

[70] Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. xiv.

[71] Taagepera, "Western Awareness of Soviet Deportations in Estonia," pp. 123, 125.

[72] Alexander Statiev, "Motivations and Goals of the Soviet Deportations in the Western Borderlands," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28(6):995, 2005.

[73] Dugin, ed., *Neizvestnyi GULAG,* p. 101; Document No. 6 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* pp. 37, 38.

[74] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 353; Document No. 5.1 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, pp. 148–149.

[75] Bleiere, "Repressions against Farmers in Latvia," p. 251. In 1947, 77,791 persons were deported from western Ukraine, and in 1948 and 1949, 8,224 and 23,671 persons, respectively, were deported. This means that a total of 109,686 people, or 2.2 percent of the 5 million West

When discussing Soviet deportation policy, one should separate innocent victims, such as families of the arrested persons, wealthy peasants, and expelled diaspora nationalities, from those caught in action against the regime. In the latter case, the Soviet government acted like other states. Nobody calls "deportation" the shipment of German POWs to North America during World War II. Similarly, one can hardly regard the Baltic soldiers who served in the SS, were taken prisoner by the Soviets, and then shipped to Siberia as deportees, which historians often do.[76] Some even include in the number of deportees men drafted into the Red Army in 1941, although not those drafted into SS units that retreated to Germany in 1944.[77] As Geoffrey Swain notes regarding Latvia, "It was not only that the Communists deported fewer people than the fascists, but that the methods they used were less random."[78] Borderland people were less loyal than the minorities exiled from the old territories during the war, but the government did not expect them to be as loyal as most Soviets. It deported only those who in its opinion opposed or could oppose the regime and also criminals. After all, it exiled only some of those who had proven their hostility, such as the *Aizsargi* members and *Schutzmanns,* many of whom were not even registered by the police until 1948.[79] The Estonian police arrested only those former *Omakaitse* members who were particularly notorious during the German occupation, those who hid weapons or banned literature, those suspected of maintaining contact with the resistance, and those who went into hiding.[80] Soviet actions, correspondence among party leaders, and police reports show that deportations in the borderland had no ethnic motivation beyond the expulsion of diaspora nationalities, a policy welcomed by the rest of the local population.[81]

As for the second argument – that deportations allegedly were meant to facilitate colonization of the borderlands – the proportion of the local ethnic groups versus the Russians indeed decreased with time in most borderland regions. However, this is hardly a proof of deliberate colonization policy, as

Ukrainian population, were exiled in those years; Bilas, *Represyvno-karal'na systema,* Vol. 1, p. 284; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 325.

[76] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 73; Bleiere, "Repressions against Farmers in Latvia in 1944–1953," p. 250.

[77] Vello Salo, ed., *Population Losses in Estonia* (Scarborough: Maarjamaa, 1989), p. 9; Mälksoo, "Soviet Genocide?" p. 65. Mart Laar states, for instance, "the losses incurred by the Estonian population as a result of the Soviet occupation during the years 1940–1941 amounted to 52,750 people"; Mart Laar, *Red Terror* (Tallinn: Grenader, 2005), pp. 34–36. He includes in this number 33,000 men mobilized into the Red Army and 5,573 men serving in the 22nd Territorial Corps that retreated from Estonia with the Red Army. These men cannot be called victims of Soviet repression, and most of them survived.

[78] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 215.

[79] Document No. 4.20 in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii,* p. 654; Document No. 142 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* p. 290.

[80] Document No. 369 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2, p. 1032.

[81] Document No. 2.13 in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii,* p. 126.

some authors claim.[82] Moscow officially recognized "national peculiarities" in the Baltic region,[83] although not in western Ukraine and western Belorussia, and pursued cultural rather than ethnic assimilation of the local populations, hoping thus to replace simple identities with nested ones. The increase of ethnic Russians versus the local ethnic groups began after 1946, when the wartime restrictions on migration were lifted, and many Russians moved to the more prosperous western provinces on their own initiative. In 1945–1953, the government recruited only 23,774 people for work in Estonia, whereas the spontaneous annual migration until 1949 amounted to 20,000 people, although it decreased later on. Far from approving this uncontrolled influx of Slavs, the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Estonia, the hand of Moscow in this region, demanded that the wartime restrictions on migration to Estonia be preserved.[84] Slavs typically moved to areas where many jobs were opening in the industrial sector, such as Estonia and Latvia, but ignored poorer agrarian regions, such as Lithuania, where the proportion of ethnic Russians increased only from 2.4 to 8.5 percent between 1941 and 1959, not so much because of the influx of Russians as because the proportion of two other major ethnic groups decreased: After the Holocaust, the proportion of Jews dropped from 7.0 to 0.9 percent, whereas the Polish share in Lithuania declined from 13.0 to 8.5 percent after "repatriation" of the Poles. The proportion of Lithuanians actually grew from 71.0 to 79.3 percent between 1941 and 1959.[85] Had a colonization policy existed, the government would have ensured that all western regions received an equal proportion of Russian "colonists."

Moscow defined general policy in the borderlands, and Russian officials often dominated the urban administrations and especially the police; they also were the majority of the Communists in the borderlands. By 1 January 1945, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians made up, respectively, 32, 35, and 40 percent of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian Communist parties, and their proportion became even smaller in the following several years. About half the Communists were police officers and soldiers, and most of them came from Russia. However, at lower levels of the administrative hierarchy, especially in rural regions, the proportion of local ethnic groups among administrators corresponded to their percentage among the population of the western provinces. In January 1947, 62 percent of the secretaries of Latvian provincial and city party committees and 90 percent of the chairs of the provincial and city executive committees were Latvian.[86] In Lithuania, only 29 percent of the members and employees of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist party were Lithuanians by 1946, but their share

[82] Taagepera, *Estonia*, pp. 81–84.
[83] Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), p. 130.
[84] Ibid., pp. 156, 157.
[85] Ludas Truska, *Lietuva: 1938–1953 metais* (Kaunas: Šviesa, 1995), p. 129.
[86] Kalnberziņš, "Politicheskaia situatsiia v respublike [Political situation in the republic]" (29 January 1947), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 23, l. 33.

among first town and provincial party secretaries equaled 80 percent. Among party "nomenclature," Lithuanians constituted 1,398 of the 2,577 members in 1951.[87] In Estonia, local officials were the large majority in most top offices and in the rural administrations. By 1953, Estonians made 66.6 percent of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party, 75.1 percent of the secretaries of district party committees, 80.5 percent of the Supreme Soviet, 82.2 percent of the senior members of the Council of Ministers, and 88.2 percent of the chairs of rural executive committees and their deputies.[88] While Estonians were underrepresented in the Central Committee and in district party committees compared with their proportion in Estonia, they were overrepresented compared with their proportion in the Estonian Communist party. In the other agencies just mentioned, Estonians were only slightly underrepresented, or their percentage roughly corresponded to their share in the population of the republic. Many Estonians in the top administrative agencies had lived in the Soviet Union during the interwar period, yet it was mainly Estonians rather than ethnic Russians who enforced Moscow's policy in the Estonian countryside, and the same was true of western Ukraine. Most people involved in the deportations from Estonia were local Communists.[89] In Lithuania and Latvia, however, Slavs dominated the administration.

Moscow did sponsor the spread of Russian as a means of interethnic communication. A decree passed in March 1938 introduced the study of Russian as a mandatory subject at schools all over the Soviet Union, and it was automatically extended to the borderlands. The decree, however, warned overzealous Russian officials working in ethnic regions: "The tendency to turn Russian from an [academic] subject into the language of teaching and thus to encroach on the native language is harmful and wrong."[90] Introduction of the language spoken by the majority into the school curriculum was a rational policy in a multiethnic state; after all, its 100 ethnic groups needed a lingua franca. Knowledge of Russian eased the integration of ethnic minorities in Soviet society and dramatically increased their opportunities for social mobility outside their native regions, and men needed it to serve in the Red Army. Nonetheless, Moscow insisted on keeping every borderland republic bilingual; it ordered Russian officials sent to the borderlands to study the local languages and reprimanded those who attempted to create a Russian linguistic environment in their offices.[91] In Lithuania, students in Russian gymnasiums devoted equal numbers of hours to the study of Lithuanian and Russian, while in Lithuanian gymnasiums they studied Lithuanian an

[87] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml',* pp. 146–149; Document No. 1.16 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, p. 155.

[88] Document No. 3 in Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody (1944–1956)* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), pp. 169, 233.

[89] Mart Laar, "The March 1949 Deportations," p. 94.

[90] Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 1, p. 393.

[91] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml',* p. 158.

average of 24 hours per year more than Russian.[92] Moscow sought to "sovietize" the borderlands as quickly as possible. Since Soviet policy was enforced by Communists and specialists from the center, mostly Russians, it resulted in certain "Russification" of most borderland regions, but archival evidence suggests that this was a by-product of "sovietization" rather than an articulated intent to colonize the borderlands.

The final point used to support the concept of genocide is the assumption that most or a very large part of the deportees died. These assumptions typically are not backed by hard evidence.[93] Unlike the ethnic deportations of the interwar period, which were intended to move a suspicious part of the population from vulnerable frontier regions into the interior with as little pain as possible and to reimburse their lost property, most deportations conducted in the borderlands were designed to punish "class enemies," relatives of resistance members and criminals. Most of these deportees were sent to Siberia or the Russian North, and all their property beyond a small limit was confiscated.[94] Official directives outlined a harsher treatment of these deportees than the blacklisted ethnic groups in the old territories. Only the refugees from Poland, mainly Jewish, were not subject to punishment, although the conditions of the "special settlements" in which they were forced to live, with barracks that offered between 1.2 and 1.9 square meters of living space per person, less than GULAG prisoners had,[95] convinced them that they also were being punished. Even though most deportations had a punitive component, the Soviet regime sought to exile rather than kill the victims. Its bureaucrats issued numerous orders to the local authorities about the settlement of deportees in "normal living conditions," and GULAG officers attempted to enforce these regulations.[96] However, as with deportations conducted during the interwar period, the top Soviet leaders saw the expulsion of blacklisted groups as a top priority and their settlement as a remote, secondary one, especially because during the war and the hectic postwar reconstruction of the economy, they were busy elsewhere. Those who ordered the deportations knew from the rich experience they had gained that they certainly would be unable to enforce their directives regarding the settlement of deportees during

[92] Documents No. 7.7, 7.9, and 7.11 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, pp. 229, 230, 232, 234.

[93] Mart Laar, *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival* (Washington: Compass Press, 1992), p. 8; Laar, *Red Terror,* pp. 11, 16, 17, 35, 36; Gerutis, *Lithuania: 700 Years,* p. 299; Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 104; Aigi Rahi-Tamm, "Deportations in Estonia, 1941–1951," in Kuuk and Raun, *Soviet Deportations in Estonia,* pp. 18, 46; Taagepera, "Western Awareness of Soviet Deportations in Estonia," p. 124.

[94] Documents No. 2.101, 4.15, and 4.19 in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii,* pp. 270, 646, 651.

[95] Document Nr.2.39 in Iakovlev, *Stalinskie deportatsii*, 163. GULAG prisoners were supposed to have 2 square metres of living space per person in their barracks, Document Nr.412 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, 2:1150.

[96] Alexander Statiev, "Soviet Ethnic Deportations: Intent versus Outcome," *Journal of Genocide Research* 11(3):247–248, 255–256, 2009.

the war if they could not do so even in peacetime, but they were indifferent to the welfare of the exiles.

People deported on the eve of the German attack suffered a worse plight than those exiled after the war. The largest among the eight categories deported in 1941 were families of various "class enemies," whose heads were arrested. The women and children who found themselves in Siberia without family heads and often without shelter were particularly vulnerable. In the fall of 1941, GULAG officers wrote frequent reports to Moscow describing the living conditions of these "special settlers" as "absolutely unsatisfactory" and "extremely hard" in half the provinces to which they were exiled and attributed this to the failure of the authorities to specify an agency responsible for supervising and supporting this new type of deportees.[97] In these Siberian provinces, "special settlers" lived crowded in summer barracks and dugouts, and many fell victim to diseases that spread quickly in such conditions. Bureaucratic bickering prolonged by the distraction of Soviet leaders by military matters and their overall indifference to the welfare of "class enemies" were responsible for the high death rate among deportees. The archival sources yield only partial information on the "special settlers'" vital statistics, but these records nonetheless are far more accurate than the Cold War era "estimates." Of the 9,546 Latvians deported in 1941, over 1,900, about 20 percent, had died by the time this group was released after 1953. Of the 305 Jewish residents of Estonia deported during the 1941 deportation, 48, or 15.5 percent, died.[98] The death rates among those arrested during this deportation and placed in labor camps rather than special settlements were much higher, but these were GULAG prisoners rather than deportees, and the death rate among Russian prisoners was equally high. The Latvian and Jewish Estonian deportees were kept in typical Siberian special settlements and labor camps; it would be reasonable to assume that the death rate of other victimized groups was similar. This death rate is considerably lower than that of the *kulaks* deported from the old territories during collectivization: 29.6 percent of them died between 1932 and 1941.[99]

Those exiled after the end of the war had a higher survival rate than those deported on the eve of the German attack because the state conducted these deportations in relaxed conditions, after some preparation and after it had acquired a wealth of experience in such operations. The death rate during transportation to the place of the exile was far lower than it had been during earlier deportations: "only" 0.2 percent of persons deported from Estonia in March 1949 died on the trains. The large majority of families were exiled along with their heads, which increased their chances of survival. While in

[97] Documents No. 274 and 278 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 1, pp. 797, 805, 813.

[98] Janis Riekstins, "The 14 June 1941 Deportation in Latvia," in Caune, *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia,* p. 72; Salo, *Population Losses 1940–1941,* pp. 3–5.

[99] Document No. 418 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2, pp. 1167, 1168.

1941 the deportees were brought to places where nobody expected them, and they therefore could not reckon on shelter and jobs, in 1949, the police checked twice in advance on the availability of accommodations and employment in the regions of exile,[100] and despite numerous instances of failure to provide these after the deportation, the living conditions of the postwar "special settlers" were still better than those of the prewar deportees. The police also suggested that the government should give three-year loans to every exiled family for the acquisition of cattle and housewares and also waive their taxes and mandatory deliveries of agricultural products for three years.[101] The exact annual death rate among the "special settlers" deported after 1944 is hard to assess in most cases because their population in exile increased annually until 1953, yet the improved police statistics provide an opportunity to calculate compounded death rates and sometimes even annual death rates of certain categories of deportees. By 1955, the government had exiled 203,662 West Ukrainian "bandit accomplices" and *kulaks,* of whom 14,435 died in 1945–1950. Soviet sources do not say how many people died in 1944, when the number of West Ukrainian deportees was small, or in 1951–1955, when the mortality was lower than in the 1940s.[102] Clearly, the large majority of West Ukrainian "special settlers" survived.

The comprehensive data compiled by Latvian scholars show that of 42,133 Latvians deported in 1949, 5,073 persons, or 12 percent, died between 1949 and 1960.[103] After 1953, the state began the mass release of deportees; therefore, the annual death rate of this group can be calculated accurately only between 1949 and 1953. A representative sample of data taken in six random Latvian provinces embraces 23 percent of the deportees. It shows that 60 percent of all deaths occurred in the group that was older than 60 years in 1949: 86.9 percent of those who were older than 80 and 36.6 percent of those who were between 60 and 80 when they were deported did not survive the exile. However, for the vast majority of the deportees, those younger than 60 in 1949, the annual death rate was around 1 percent or lower, and the compounded death rate for the period 1949–1959 was 2.5 percent for the age group between 7 and 15 years, 6.6 percent for those between 16 and 59 years, and 6.8 percent for those younger than 7 years (Table 6.6 and Figures 6.1 and 6.2).

These tables and charts suggest three conclusions: First, the mortality curves resemble the regular mortality tendencies in any society, although the death rates of every group certainly were above those of their counterparts in Latvia – the natural outcome of forced migration. Second, a large number

[100] Documents No. 291, 303, 317, 315, and 319 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2, pp. 842, 863, 906–906, 912, 925.

[101] Document No. 321 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2, p. 928.

[102] Document No. 121 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7, p. 550; Document No. 106 in Bugai, ed., *Deportatsiia narodov Kryma,* p. 115.

[103] Riekstins et al., *Represeto saraksts,* Vol. 1, pp. 3, 4.

TABLE 6.6 *Annual and Compounded Death Rates among Latvians Deported in 1949 from Aizputes, Aluksnes, Bauskas, Cesu, Daugavpils, and Gulbenes Provinces*

Age group at time of deportation	Total number of deportees	Annual number of deaths (Nr.)/Death rate (%)										Compounded death rate	
		1949		1950		1951		1952		1953		1949–1959	
		Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%
1–6	827	40	4.8	7	0.9	3	0.4	4	0.5	1	0.1	56	6.8
7–15	1,765	12	0.7	5	0.3	6	0.3	8	0.5	6	0.3	44	2.5
16–59	5,393	65	1.2	80	1.5	53	1.0	36	0.7	28	0.5	354	6.6
60–79	1,521	13	8.6	100	7.2	75	5.8	72	5.9	6	5.3	557	36.6
80+	145	62	42.8	20	24.1	8	13.6	14	27.5	8	21.6	126	86.9
Total	9,651	310		212		145		134		104		1,137	

Note: The sample embraces 23 percent of all Latvians deported that year.
Source: Calculated from Riekstins et al., *Represeto saraksts*, Vol. 1. pp. 5–134.

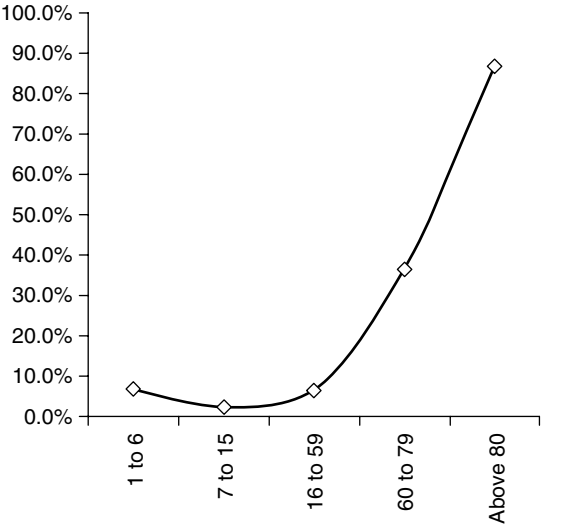

FIGURE 6.1 Compounded death rate among Latvians deported in 1949 from Aizputes, Aluksnes, Bauskas, Cesu, Daugavpils, and Gulbenes provinces, 1949–1959.

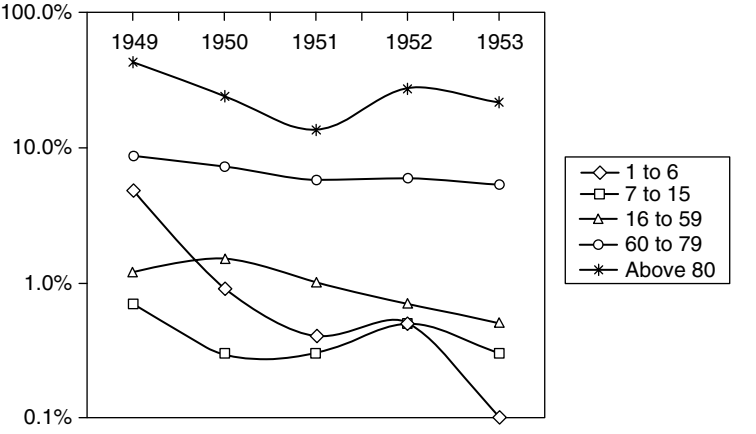

FIGURE 6.2 Annual death rate among Latvians deported in 1949 from Aizputes, Aluksnes, Bauskas, Cesu, Daugavpils, and Gulbenes provinces, 1949–1953.

of those older than age 60 would have died between 1949 and 1959 even had they remained in Latvia. Third, since governments pursuing genocide typically inflict an equally high death rate on all age groups of targeted people, the low mortality of Latvians who had been younger than age 60 in 1949 proves conclusively that the authorities did not pursue genocide; rather, they were indifferent to the deportees' ordeals.

Their ordeals must be placed in context. Death rates were high everywhere in the Soviet Union during the war years. Young males deported in 1939–1941 had a far better chance of survival as exiles than as conscripts to the Red Army: While the compounded death rate of the deportees reached about 20 percent between 1941 and 1953, and the death rate for young men was lower than average, the Soviet armed forces lost 29.5 percent of their draftees between 1941 and 1945.[104] Soviet deportations from the western borderlands were less murderous than the ethnic cleansings conducted by Baltic nationalists in the summer of 1941 and by Ukrainian nationalists in 1943–1944. Having deported 58,852 Jewish refugees from Poland,[105] the government unwittingly saved them from extermination by Nazis and nationalists. So too with Poles exiled in 1940–1941 from western Ukraine: In 1943–1944, the UPA slaughtered almost 20 percent of the Polish population in Volhynia[106] – a death rate higher than that of Polish deportees, which equaled about 5 percent.[107] The deportations of members of the borderland titular ethnic groups were not exceptionally violent compared with the cleansing conducted by East and Central European governments at that time. The Soviet administration treated real or imagined enemies of the state in the western regions and in the old territories in the same manner.

Conclusion

The commitment of Soviet leaders to class struggle and social engineering and their habitual use of coercion as the solution to problems ensured that they would favor mass deportations and other types of forced migrations as tools of policy. The government viewed them as fair punishment for resistance and an appropriate means to strengthen security in regions threatened by external or internal enemies. Deportations and other forced migrations targeted not only the active opposition but all potential opponents: guerrilla families, "class enemies," the former political elite, diaspora ethnic groups, those who had displayed hostility toward the regime during the German occupation, and the "fifth column" of foreign states. They also were to facilitate the agrarian reform and grand economic projects such as collectivization. The deportations embraced a larger number of people than any other repressive measure.

[104] Calculated from G. F. Krivosheev, ed., *Rossiia i SSSR v voinakh XX veka* (Moscow: OLMA Press, 2001), pp, 246, 457.

[105] Bugai, "20–50-e gody: pereseleniia i deportatsii evreiskogo naseleniia v SSSR," p. 179.

[106] Wiktor Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth* (Toronto, Canada: Wiktor Poliszczuk, 1999), p. 271, 272.

[107] Of 139,590 deported *osadniks,* 132,463 remained in exile by August 1941; V. Chernyshov, "Spravka po kolichestvu grazhdan byvshikh pol'skikh poddannykh [Report on the number of former Polish citizens]" (August 1941), GARF, f. 9479, op. 1, d. 116, ll. 1, 2; Document No. 107 in Dugin, ed., *Neizvestnyi GULAG,* p. 86.

Most Soviet deportations were brutal but arguably a rational means to achieve the objectives in view: The "repatriation" of diaspora nationalities in 1939–1940 and 1945–1947 undermined possible claims for disputed territories; the exile of Polish *osadniks* and landlords drove a hostile segment of the population away from the frontier regions, provided land resources for the agrarian reform, and thus secured at least some support among the local peasants; the deportations of May–June 1941 reduced underground networks in the frontier regions; the threats to exile families unless their guerrilla members surrendered, coupled with amnesties, saved more lives than they destroyed; and small deportations of suspected resistance sympathizers in retaliation for every attack against the authorities forced peasants to ban guerrillas from their villages or report about them. The latter were a milder version of the hostage taking the Bolsheviks had practiced extensively during the civil war; the police never executed hostages during the campaign in the borderlands, and the word *hostage* vanished from their lexicon. The party could have picked better timing for collectivization instead of starting it amid the counterinsurgency campaign, but once this objective was set, it could only be attained after opponents of collectivization had been removed and their property stolen.

Wholesale ethnic expulsions in the old territories were the most irrational aspect of Soviet deportation policy. They reached their peak during 1943–1944. After 1944 and until 1953, the government exiled people mainly from the western borderlands, where deportations had no ethnic component beyond the "repatriation" of diaspora nationalities, mostly completed in 1946. The latter was the largest forced movement of population after the exile of *kulaks* in 1929–1933, but it hardly can be qualified as a typical deportation because the "repatriates" preserved a large part of their property and moved, without knowing it, toward a brighter future than the one that awaited the Soviets. In the western borderlands, the primary criteria for selection of deportees were class, citizenship, previous record, and alleged support of the resistance. In contrast to the sweeping deportations on an ethnic basis in the old territories, most of those conducted in the western regions were as logical and as discriminate as this crude security tool could possibly be. The victims of this policy faced the same tragedy as blacklisted members of "loyal" ethnic groups in the old territories.

7

Amnesties

> To win a hundred victories in a hundred battles is not the highest excellence; the highest excellence is to subdue the enemy's army without fighting at all.[1]
>
> – Sun Tzu

Guerrilla warfare is usually a more bitter form of conflict than conventional combat because rebels and security forces ignore the "laws of war," the border between combatants and civilians is blurred, and families of the opponents are victimized with deliberate cruelty to intimidate other civilians. However, apart from the warring parties, most people in rebellious regions "display a combination of weak preferences and opportunism, both of which are subject to survival considerations. Their association with risk-taking minorities tends to be loose and subject to the fortunes of the war and its impact on one's welfare."[2] A pragmatic government forfeits its desire for revenge and offers pardons to all those who joined the rebels because of accident or opportunistic considerations – and even to those who used to be committed to the cause but have lost faith in the victory; otherwise, desperate guerrilla remnants without alternatives will continue fighting for years. The success of amnesty hinges on a delicate balance of punishment and clemency, and a tilt toward either limits the effectiveness of counterinsurgency, as many governments have learned from experience. After Mexico won independence in 1820, its leaders regarded amnesties as the easiest way to undermine the armed contenders for power and to incorporate rebels and bandits into society. Although this strategy often worked, the easy pardons led the opposition to view revolt as the best solution to its problems, and military putsches, rural insurgencies, and banditry continued throughout the nineteenth century. The German security forces in the occupied Soviet territories, conversely, executed every partisan, no matter whether captured or

[1] Sun Tzu, *The Art of Warfare* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), p. 111.

[2] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 103.

surrendered. This helped the resistance to survive through 1941–1942, when morale was at its nadir and many partisans sought to quit, but the Nazi policy left them no such option. Amnesties work only if guerrillas have lost faith in victory and the state keeps its promises and monitors the former insurgents, promptly punishing any attempt to resume subversion. This chapter traces the development of the Soviet amnesty policy during and after World War II, examines how quasi-Marxist ideology affected it, and discusses whether the government honored its pledge to pardon the insurgents. Ideology and the civil war experience encouraged the Communists to exploit anticipated tensions in the enemy camp. Suppressing armed opposition in the borderlands with utmost force, the Soviet regime nonetheless offered generous pardons to the enemy's fighters. Thousands of guerrillas hurried to take advantage of the opportunity to escape inevitable death. Amnesties coupled with severe pressure against rebels and their families were among the most effective tools in the Soviet counterinsurgency arsenal.

Since the Soviet Communists viewed armed conflicts in class terms, they believed that they could persuade "class allies" in enemy armies to switch sides. During the first occupation of the western borderlands, the Soviet authorities met armed resistance only in western Ukraine. The police arrested all those whose social background or record suggested they might resist and executed some of them, but ideology prompted leniency toward peasant rebels. The government believed that *bedniaks* and *seredniaks* supporting the nationalists were merely an "ignorant tool in OUN's" and that they would defect if their class consciousness was awakened. NKVD ordered its officers:

1. Visit all families of OUN fugitives and tell them that their hiding relatives must report to the appropriate agencies, surrender their weapons, and stop their struggle against Soviet authority.
2. Explain to the families that they [the fugitives] will suffer no consequences for such a deed [surrender] but will be praised. …
3. … Tell them [the fugitives] … that we do not intend to punish them because they have been deceived by the *kulaks* and advise them to work honestly on the land given to them by the Soviet power.
4. In the future, arrest only OUN leaders and activists. Do not arrest the rank and file because it consists mainly of poor peasants.[3]

Communists also viewed conventional war in class terms. Hoping to exploit the anticipated class tensions among their adversaries in the war against Finland and during the first months of the German invasion, the Political Directorate of the Red Army fruitlessly called on enemy soldiers to defect and attack their own bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, the *Infantry Field Manual* of the Red Army stated that it "should show no mercy toward the traitors of the

[3] Document No. 193 in S. B. Stepashin, ed., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine,* Vol. 1, Book 2 (Moscow: Kniga i biznes, 1995), pp. 118, 119.

Motherland": Soviet defectors deserved only death.[4] The government abruptly revised its policy toward collaborators when it realized that they were mostly desperate POWs who had enlisted simply to escape the camps. It also worried that if denied the opportunity to defect, the collaborators would fight in earnest and attract thousands of anti-Communist volunteers. From the winter of 1941–1942, Soviet partisan propaganda began promising full amnesty to collaborator defectors but death to those who remained with the Germans. Collaborators captured in battle were rarely taken prisoner. However, defectors usually were enlisted in partisan ranks after screening by the NKVD, which arrested only those who were particularly suspicious or notorious and sent them across the frontline, if this opportunity existed, or executed them. Those who defected to the Red Army were sent to penal units. The amnesty policy, initially haphazard, became centralized in mid-1942. By August, partisan regional headquarters had received a *Manual on Methods Aimed at Undermining the Morale of the Anti-Soviet Bands and Units Raised by the Germans in the Occupied Territories,* the first official document urging partisans to convert the collaborators.[5] In November, Panteleimon Ponomarenko, head of Central Partisan Headquarters, formulated the policy toward collaborators:

> Along with traitors who serve the invaders voluntarily, the Germans have enlisted some people and POWs by using terror, lies, blackmail and conscription. … Partisan units must fulfill an important and urgent task: They have to frustrate the enemy plan to raise "volunteer" formations for antipartisan actions from the population of the occupied regions and to undermine their morale. … Give every defector a chance to atone for his guilt by fighting for the liberation of the Motherland from the German-fascist invaders. Do not entrust them with command positions in partisan bands and secure a permanent surveillance over them. … Use the local population to intensively spread information about the good treatment of defectors by the partisans. … Arrange appeals of lone defectors and groups to the personnel of anti-Soviet units in order to encourage them to defect to the partisans with their [entire] units and formations and to turn their weapons against the Germans. In order to prove their sincerity, the units and groups planning to defect should destroy the local German garrisons. … Cleanse the units defecting with their entire personnel and weapons to the partisans of hostile elements and give them their own regions of operation and their own combat missions. Do not fuse them with partisan bands; instead, organize a core of reliable partisans in such units and appoint [reliable] commanders.[6]

[4] V. A. Zolotarev and G. N. Sevost'ianov, eds., *Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina 1941–1945,* Vol. 3 (Moscow: Nauka, 1999), p. 158.

[5] Interrogation of Captain A. D. Rusanov (17 November 1943), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 761, l. 17; B. N. Kovalev, "Antifashistskaia bor'ba: analiz propagandistskogo protivostoianiia," Ph.D. dissertation, St. Petersburg University, 1993, p. 85.

[6] Panteleimon Ponomarenko, head of the Central Partisan HQ, "Ukazaniia o sposobakh razlozheniia antisovetskikh otriadov i chastei [Manual on the methods aimed to undermine the morale of the anti-Soviet bands and units]" (November 1942), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 754, ll. 160–163.

This tactic brought tremendous success. In February 1943, five days after reaching the front, a collaborator Tatar battalion with 930 men killed 60 to 70 German officers and NCOs and joined the partisans. On 12 September 1943, two of three companies of the 389th Turkestan battalion killed 7 German officers and 53 NCOs and crossed the front with all weapons.[7] In August 1943, the First Russian SS Brigade killed its German personnel and then enthusiastically fought the Germans as the First Anti-Fascist Partisan Brigade, retaining its commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Vladimir Gil'-Rodinonov. He was awarded the Red Star decoration and promoted to colonel. Several partisan bands made up exclusively of former collaborators fought in the Briansk Forest. During the last six months of 1943, over 10,000 collaborators switched sides.[8] In October 1943, Kurt Zeitzler, chief of the German Army General Staff, remarked: "The *Osttruppen* are becoming more and more unreliable. … It is better to have no security units in the rear areas than to have unreliable elements who in a crisis desert to the partisans together with their weapons." That month, the frequent defections of Soviet volunteers prompted Hitler to order their transfer to western Europe.[9] Most defectors who fought in partisan bands or the Red Army received a full pardon after the war. Though historians usually attribute the German failure to exploit their collaborators on the Eastern Front to the narrow-mindedness of Nazism, the Soviet amnesties shaped the collaborators' sentiments with equal force.

When the advancing Soviets met nationalist resistance in 1944, they continued this policy line. The authorities viewed amnesties as a major means to return from the forests draft evaders and deserters from collaborator units.[10] Most of these folk were not ideological enemies and did not plan to fight the Soviets but could join the guerrillas out of desperation. The governments of the western republics attempted to prevent this development with periodical amnesties. Ukrainian leaders declared the first amnesty on 12 February 1944, when the Red Army had reoccupied only a fraction of western Ukraine. They acknowledged that many "honest people" had joined the nationalists

[7] Interrogation of Abdulla Atakhanov No. 74 (13 September 1943), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 165, ll. 74, 75; Document No. 146 in V. F. Shauro et al., eds., *Vsenarodnoe partisanskoe dvizhenie v Belorussii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny. Dokumenty i materialy*, Vol. 2, Book 1 (Minsk: Belarus', 1967), pp. 230, 231.

[8] A. V. Okorokov, *Antisovetskie voinskie formirovaniia v gody vtoroi mirovoi voiny* (Moscow: VU, 2000), pp. 80–84; "Politinformatsiia [Report on the political situation]" (19 July 1943), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 554, ll. 8–10; Ianushko, head of the 1st Department of the Kalinin Partisan HQ (no date), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 726, l. 105; Interrogation of Ia. G. Lebed', chief of staff of the Zaslonov Partisan Brigade (no date), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 749, l. 45; A. V. Okorokov, "Sovetskie spetssluzhby i russkoe osvoboditel'noe dvizheniie," in A. V. Okorokov and S. I. Drobiazko, eds., *Matreialy po istorii russkogo osvoboditel'nogo dvizheniia* (Moscow: Arkhiv ROA, 1998), p. 250.

[9] Matthew Cooper, *The Phantom War* (London: Macdonald & Jane's, 1979), p. 120; Wilfried Strik-Strikfeldt, *Protiv Stalina i Gitlera* (Frankfurt/Main: Posev, 1975), pp. 281, 282.

[10] Georgii Perov, head of the CC VKP(b) Bureau for Estonia (5 June 1946), RGASPI, f. 598, op. 1, d. 4, l. 1.

and promised "all members of the so-called 'UPA' and 'UNRA' [*Ukrains'ka Narodna Revoliutsiina Armiia* (Ukrainian People's Revolutionary Army), or *Sich*] who defect to the Soviet authority and honestly and totally terminate all contacts with the Hitlerist OUN … full pardon for their grave mistakes and crimes committed against the Motherland."[11] On 27 November, the Ukrainian government offered a second amnesty; a third was given on 19 May 1945, and three more were given before 1948. Even the last one, declared on 30 December 1949, when the resistance was dying, caused 8,000 fugitives to surrender. Between official amnesties, Ukrainian leaders issued many appeals to guerrillas to surrender and receive pardon.[12] The Latvian Communist administration duly enlisted rank-and-file deserters of the SS divisions who reported to mobilization into the Red Army, and it declared amnesties for guerrillas in September 1945 and August 1946.[13] The Estonian government offered five amnesties between October 1944 and 1955, and Lithuania granted them in February and June 1945, in February 1946, and in 1947; the last two came in October 1955 and March 1959.[14]

Antanas Sniečkus, first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist party, ordered the police to summon relatives of guerrillas and hand them personal letters about amnesty; he also instructed the police to return from exile the families of guerrillas who had accepted amnesty and proved their loyalty. If peasants hinted to the authorities that their relatives were considering surrendering but were worried that they would be arrested, the police gave these peasants custom-made guarantees.[15] The police attempted to influence insurgents through people whom they respected. Most peasants in the western borderlands were believers, and authorities pressed priests to persuade insurgents to surrender. The police also forced pardoned guerrillas to sign letters to their comrades, written by the police, containing appeals

[11] "Do uchastnykiv tak zvanykh 'UPA' ta 'UNRA' [To the participants of so-called 'UPA' and 'UNRA']" (12 February 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d .130, ll. 101, 102.

[12] Documents No. 28 and 52 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), pp. 155–159, 223–230.; Pan'kovskii, head of the Information Sector, "Spravka o xode obsuzhdeniia prikaza ministra GB USSR Nr.312 [Discussion of order no. 312 issued by the Minister of the State Security of Ukraine]" (January 1950), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 3, d. 472, l. 266; S. V. Bilenko, *Na okhrane tyla strany: istrebitel'nye batal'ony i polki v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), pp. 185, 187; Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), p. 585; M. I. Semiriaga, *Kollaboratsionizm* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000), p. 126; Pavel Sudoplatov, *Spetsoperatsii* (Moscow: OLMA Press, 1999), pp. 415, 416.

[13] Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), pp. 195, 197.

[14] George Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred: Lithuanian Nationalism during the Triple Occupation, 1939–1953," Ph.D. dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston, 2003, p. 142.; V. Stanley Vardys, "The Partisan Movement in Postwar Lithuania," in V. StanleyVardys, ed., *Lithuania Under the Soviets* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 107.

[15] Documents No. 4.14 and 4.17 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m,* Vol 2. (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), pp. 96, 113; Document No. 53 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5:261.

to surrender and claiming that the government kept its word and released defectors. Such letters, signed by as many as 665 persons, were published in local newspapers.[16] However, the most effective method for causing desertion was deportation of guerrillas' families. Between 10 January and 10 June 1945, of 35,614 West Ukrainian families threatened with deportation if they failed to turn in their missing relatives, 22,306 persuaded the fugitives to surrender.[17]

Initially, Soviet amnesties targeted only the guerrilla rank and file, hoping, as Nikolai Shatalin, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia, put it, "to attract people who are socially proximate to us but who went to the forests under the influence of fascist propaganda."[18] The state did not promise amnesty to guerrilla leaders. Exploiting this situation, OUN forged leaflets in which the government allegedly demanded the summary execution of all apprehended UPA commanders. In response, Khrushchev suggested pardoning any guerrillas who turned themselves in.[19] On 19 May 1945, the Ukrainian government set a two-month deadline for surrender. Vasilii Riasnoi, the people's commissar of internal affairs of Ukraine, issued an internal order: "All Ukrainian-German nationalist bandits, both leaders and privates, who voluntarily surrender to the Soviet power before 20 July will not be punished but pardoned. Those eligible for military service will be sent to the district conscription offices, and the others will resume their civilian activities." If pardoned persons "prove their allegiances to the Motherland by honest work or service in the Red Army," their deported families would be returned home. The amnesty announcement, as with every one issued by the government, also threatened those who continued fighting: "All Ukrainian-German nationalist bandits failing to report to the Soviet authorities by 20 July 1945 will be treated as bitter enemies of the Soviet people and traitors to the Motherland – [they will be] arrested and subjected to severe punishment or, if they resist, destroyed. Their families will be deported."[20] The Estonian declaration of amnesty was less generous than the Ukrainian one but probably more honest in the promise it gave to notorious guerrillas: "All those whose hands are stained with Soviet blood must be punished. But even to these people, the Soviet powers [*sic*] say: Your voluntary exit from the woods and surrender to the Soviet regime

[16] Grushetskii to Shamberg, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (6 February 1945). RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 450, l. 13; See also TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 930, l. 134; d. 1697, l. 19; "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 3:115, 1995.

[17] Calculated from "Svedeniia o iavke s povinnoi banditov [Report on the surrender of bandits]" (10 January–10 June 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1739, l. 229.

[18] Nikolai Shatalin, head of the CC VKP(b) Bureau for Latvia, to Stalin (17 May 1945), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 94, l. 93.

[19] Interrogation of E. M. Basiuk, UPA Battalion Commander (20 September 1944), PC, Box 76; Document No. 8 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 3, p. 92.

[20] V. Riasnoi, people's commissar of internal affairs of Ukraine, "Prikaz [Order]" (20 May 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1616, ll. 2, 3.

[*sic*] will guarantee your life, which will certainly be in grave danger sooner or later."[21]

The state indeed pardoned some prominent guerrillas willing to cooperate, such as Vacietis, chief of staff of the Latvian Ludza "regiment"; Antons Gravars, a member of the presidium of the Latvian Partisan Union for the Defense of the Motherland; and several of its "battalion" commanders.[22] The police, however, demanded that such leaders turn in their entire units. On 16 June 1944, they negotiated through a priest the surrender of a UPA battalion commander and 326 men. In 1945, the commander of Latvian Ilukste "regiment" surrendered with 74 persons.[23]

An amnesty may or may not have a deadline. It is uncertain which approach is more effective. A permanent amnesty lets guerrillas surrender whenever they lose faith in victory but also encourages those with morale shaken but not shattered to fight on in the belief that if things get worse, they can withdraw at any moment. Deadlines may prompt guerrillas hesitating between surrender or struggle to accept their last chance for escape, but they also may bar those wishing to give up from doing so later, forcing the offer of further amnesties. When the Ukrainian government set the deadline for the amnesty declared in May 1945 for 20 July, it decided to extend it for a few days. From 21 to 23 July, 1,904 fugitives surrendered in Stanislav Province, just one of seven western Ukrainian provinces.[24] After the new deadline expired, the police often pardoned guerrillas, despite instructions from local party bosses, who feared this approach would damage their prestige more that would be gained by having more guerrillas surrender. This experience prompted the government to declare subsequent amnesties without deadlines.

The amnesties crippled the resistance in every borderland region. In western Ukraine, 18,917 persons surrendered during the first three months of 1945, or 22.8 percent of all "liquidated" fugitives, even though they knew they would be sent to the front.[25] This proportion rose when the war ended and military service was no longer risky. The Estonian police claimed that the amnesty declared in June 1946 prompted the surrender of about 45 percent of the registered fugitives. For the entire period of armed resistance in Estonia, the Soviet regime amnestied more fugitives than it arrested: 5,880 versus

[21] Mart Laar, *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival* (Washington: Compass Press, 1992), p. 58.

[22] Poliakov, acting head of the GUBB, to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 709, ll. 35, 37.

[23] Kruglov to Beria (27 June 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 125, l. 21; Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), p. 470.

[24] Khrushchev's Speech at the Meeting of the Secretaries of Provincial Party Committees (16 July 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2412, l. 8; "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 5:104, 1995; Slon', secretary of the Stanislav Provincial Party Committee, to Khrushchev, "Otchet o likvidatsii banformirovanii i podpol'ia OUN [Report on the liquidation of OUN bands and the underground]" (August 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1697, l. 245.

[25] Leont'ev to Kruglov (30 April 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 355, l .85.

TABLE 7.1 *Number of Amnestied Fugitives in Lithuania, 1944–1953*

	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	Total
Fugitives	285	36,272	1,055	708	176	51	18	17	16	6	38,604

Source: Nijole Gaškaite, Algis Kašeta, and Juozas Starkauskas, eds., *Lietuvos partizanu kovos ir ju slopinimas MVD–MGB dokumentuose* (Kaunas: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1996), p. 620.

5,796.[26] Police files show that most of those amnestied in 1944–1945 were not guerrillas but draft evaders who otherwise might have joined the resistance or peasants who had fled to the forests from fear. Soviets sought to detach them from the hardcore guerrillas and bring them back. Colonel Grushko, NKVD head in Lvov Province, bitterly rebuked his subordinates for mixing guerrillas with harmless fugitives:

> Many regard as active bandits those who have never had weapons but only live in hideouts earning itch and tuberculosis and feeding lice. … Recently, during the operation in Radekhovskii Forest, where Korovin, [district] NKGB head, was present, [police] brought to him "an active bandit" extracted from a hideout, a 72-year-old chap whose whole body and hands were shaking. Comrade Korovin said: "Release the old man or I'll smash your mugs!" Look in the mirror – you will blush and laugh at yourselves! … Who is the bandit? An armed person who actively fights the Soviet authority.[27]

Amnesties helped many peasants such as this one return to their homes. From February 1944 to July 1946, 114,809 fugitives surrendered in western Ukraine, of whom 62,357, or 54.3 percent, claimed to be draft evaders. In Lithuania, their proportion was much higher. Of 31,674 persons who surrendered in 1944–1945, 25,587, or 81 percent, claimed to be draft evaders; 2,224, or 7 percent, were deserters; and 3,863, or 12 percent, admitted that they were guerrillas.[28] The amnesties eliminated the potential pool of guerrilla recruits. The flow of defectors dried up after 1945 because the exodus of draft dodgers left only motivated insurgents (Table 7.1)

Of all Lithuanians pardoned by 1956, 21.5 percent were guerrillas, and 78.5 percent were other fugitives.[29] The police, however, emphasized that these

[26] Document No. 370 in Hilda Sabbo, ed., *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 1035; Mart Laar, "The March 1949 Deportations and the Armed Resistance Movement," in Kristi Kuuk and Toivo Raun, eds., *Soviet Deportations in Estonia: Impact and Legacy* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2007), p. 96. The number of those arrested does not include German collaborators.

[27] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei raikomov partii [Meeting of the party district secretaries]" (24 March 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 195, l. 40.

[28] Document No. 27 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 156; Nijole Gaškaite, Algis Kašeta, and Juozas Starkauskas, eds., *Lietuvos partizanu kovos ir ju slopinimas MVD–MGB dokumentuose* (Kaunas: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1996), p. 522.

[29] Calculated from ibid., p. 652. According to this source, 38,822 fugitives were amnestied in 1944–1956.

figures did not reflect reality. The surrendering insurgents were ordered to provide weapons and information on the units where they had served and civilian infrastructure of the resistance. The police arrested those refusing to betray their comrades. In contrast, draft evaders were not expected to have weapons or to know much about the guerrillas. Hence most guerrillas who surrendered in 1944–1945 claimed to be draft evaders, which the police had to accept unless it could implicate them.[30]

Insurgents became pessimistic over time. By 1947, noted a district party secretary, even "bandits whom we never hoped would surrender, those who have committed dozens of murders," reported to police. Ivan Leniv, a SB functionary who, in the words of police, "participated directly in about 200 terrorist acts," surrendered in 1951 because he "realized that bourgeois Ukrainian nationalists are doomed." Some insurgents killed their commanders to ensure a full pardon.[31] Amnestied guerrillas preferred to stay neutral in the conflict, but neither authorities nor insurgents gave them this option. If a fugitive admitted he was a guerrilla, the police pressed him to become an informant. In return for pardon, insurgent leaders had to speak at meetings with peasants, calling them to abandon the resistance and press their guerrilla relatives to surrender. Sniečkus even ordered the release of guerrillas who had been arrested outside the amnesty program if they committed no grave crimes and agreed to condemn their comrades at public meetings.[32] As the police noted, "Such speeches by commanders make a tremendous impression on the population."[33] The authorities printed these speeches in thousands of copies and dropped them from aircraft over guerrilla-infested regions. Many former guerrilla commanders had to earn their pardon by serving in commando units that targeted resistance leaders. These units became a major anti-guerrilla weapon.

Guerrillas attempted to prevent defections by terrorizing deserters. The Lithuanian insurgents usually let fighters tired of guerrilla life return home by permission of their commanders but killed those who deserted without authorization.[34] The OUN's policy toward deserters was straightforward: "Persons

[30] Suslov, "Otchet o rabote biuro TsK VKP(b) po Litve [Report of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania]" (July 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, l. 22; "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei raikomov partii [Meeting of the party district secretaries]" (20 February 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 194, l. 2.

[31] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei RK KP(b)U [Meeting of the secretaries of the district committees]" (3 December 1946), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 409, l. 34; Documents No. 22 and 92 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7, pp. 168, 457.

[32] Document No. 4.14 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, p. 96.

[33] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei RK KP(b)U L'vovskoi oblasti [Meeting of the secretaries of the district party committees of the Lvov Province]" (20 February 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 194, l. 17; Kompanets, secretary of Ternopol Provincial Party Committee, "O khode vypolneniia postanovleniia TsK KP(b)U [Implementation of the directive of the Ukrainian Communist party CC]" (24 July 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1730, l. 46; Bogorodchenko to Zlenko (30 December 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 315.

[34] HQ of the 5th District *Saturnas* (10 June 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, l. 92v.

who turned themselves in to the Bolsheviks, including OUN members, should be quietly liquidated. We don't need traitors."[35] OUN kept its word. It killed hundreds of former insurgents, their relatives, and guerrillas who were merely suspected of intending to desert.[36] Seeking to avoid retaliation for defection, some guerrillas asked their wives to inform the police of their location and requested them to attack houses where they were hiding, noting that they would shoot in the air to leave villagers with the impression that they had been captured in battle. In December 1944, 17 guerrillas in Lvov Province used this trick.[37]

The deterrent effect of guerrilla terror against deserters was uncertain: It made potential defectors think twice about whether to surrender but forced those who did so to defend themselves. As guerrilla units waned, Soviet militia waxed. Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs Timofei Strokach ordered: "In exceptional circumstances, those who turned themselves in can be enlisted in militia – as a rule, those who have proved their loyalty to the Soviet power by actively fighting banditry, who have killed and captured bandits or whose parents have suffered from the bandits (killed, house burned down, etc.)."[38] In practice, former guerrillas were routinely recruited. Hundreds fought not for Soviet power, which they detested, but for their lives and their families. Thus the militia received valuable reinforcements who knew guerrilla tactics and fought to the last bullet because they could expect no quarter if captured.

Did the Soviet government keep its word about the amnesty of guerrillas? In most cases, the answer to this question is positive. By 1953, over 4,000 amnestied fugitives were living in Estonia as free persons – the overwhelming majority of the 5,255 guerrillas who had been granted pardon in 1944–1953[39] and some of whom had died by natural death or were killed by guerrillas after they had been amnestied. Janis Kalnberziņš, first secretary of the Latvian Communist party, insisted that once amnesty was declared, the authorities had to fulfill their promises: "Our organs must not appear to be deceitful."[40] S. Grimovich, military prosecutor of the MVD troops in Lithuania, warned the police: "Every arrest of a bandit who has accepted amnesty can create instability and fear of arrest among other pardoned

[35] Tat'iana Tsarevskaia, "Ukrainskie povstantsy alkogol' ne upotrebliaiut!" *Rodina* 7:72, 1999.

[36] Begma, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (25 March 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1698, l. 8; I. Profatilov, secretary of Volyn' Provincial Party Committee, "Ezhednevnaia svodka o khode bor'by s banditizmom po Volynskoi obl. [Daily report on the fight against banditry in the Volyn' Province]" (5–6 August 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1720, l .35.

[37] Oleksenko, secretary of Drogobych Provincial Party Committee, to Khrushchev (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1695, l. 255; Bogorodchenko to Shamberg, "O khode obsuzhdeniia v L'vovskoi obl. obrashcheniia pravitel'stva USSR [Discussion of the appeal of the Ukrainian government in the Lvov Province]" (9 February 1945), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d .450, l. 7.

[38] Timofei Strokach to Kruglov (25 June 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 250.

[39] Documents No. 4 8 in Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody, 1944–1956* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), pp. 277, 292.

[40] Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler,* p. 169.

bandits and thus can lead to mass flight to the underground or to operating [guerrilla] bands."[41] However, sometimes the police did repress insurgents whom they had promised pardon. Vasilii Begma, the secretary of the Rovno Provincial Party Committee, wrote that police arrested 117 guerrillas who surrendered just in two districts of the province, but he reprimanded local authorities for this. Summary executions of guerrillas reporting to police were rare. Five UPA members who surrendered during February 1945 in Chernovtsy Province were shot, but again, the Ukrainian government regarded this as a violation of "socialist legality" and punished the guilty.[42] On 26 January 1945, police captured "Rudyi" (Iurii Stel'mashchuk), commander of *Zavykhost,* one of the three military districts of UPA-North, who confessed that nationalists under his command had killed 15,000 Poles. Khrushchev personally promised to spare his life in return for full cooperation. "Rudyi" betrayed the hiding place of Dmytro Kliachkivs'kyi, commander of the UPA-North and the former UPA commander-in-chief, who was killed on 12 February 1945. Later he led a commando unit that destroyed two UPA platoons, killing 26 guerrillas and arresting 79; captured a guerrilla printing press; and uncovered 65 hideouts. The police attributed the surrender of 487 guerrillas to "Rudyi's" talks at 15 meetings with the peasants.[43] Nevertheless, "Rudyi" was sentenced to capital punishment and executed. In all these cases, the authorities broke their word, but most often, with the "Rudyi" affair an exception, these were actions of local administrators and policemen ignoring the official policy, for which they were punished or at least reprimanded and ordered to release the arrested.

Many arrests of former guerrillas, however, were caused by their participation in resistance after they had been granted amnesty. Officials observed that most of amnestied insurgents sought to "secure the trust of the Soviet authorities and local residents with honest toil,"[44] but they also knew that guerrilla commanders used amnesties to legalize loyalists in poor health, thus removing a burden while strengthening their civilian infrastructure. The Lithuanian police reported that some amnestied guerrillas "maintain contacts with operating bands, giving them all possible assistance. … These bandit groups were involved mainly in terrorist acts … against Soviet and

[41] Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), pp. 247, 248.

[42] Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 193; Document No. 58 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3, pp. 239, 240; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 476.

[43] Beria to Stalin (17 February 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 92, ll. 305–306; Begma, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (25 March 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1698, l. 2; Document No. 114 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 4, p. 312; Konstantinov, "Spravka o polnoi i chastichnoi likvidatsii band OUN-UPA [Report on complete and partial destruction of OUN-UPA bands]" (June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 311, l. 12; Leont'ev to Kruglov (16 May 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 352, l. 35.

[44] Janis Kalnberzins, first secretary of the Latvian Communist party, "Otchet o rabote TsK KP(b) Latvii, [Report of the CC of the Latvian Communist party]" (March 1947), RGASPI, f. 17, op.88, d.753, l. 2.

party activists."[45] Police monitored amnestied guerrillas and arrested them on the slightest suspicion of treachery. Antons Juhnevičs, a leader of the Latvian Partisan Union for the Defense of the Motherland, received a pardon in January 1946 and persuaded most of the fighters to follow suit. As a result, this group effectively disintegrated. However, next month he violated pardon conditions by moving to another town, was arrested and shot in 1947.[46] If the police found out that pardoned persons who had claimed to be draft evaders were in fact active participants of the resistance, they suspected them of belonging to the guerrilla infrastructure and, depending on the circumstance, could seize them. Other arrests stemmed from the ambiguous policy toward those who surrendered after amnesty deadlines; contrary to instructions, the police often granted guerrillas pardon, but party bosses sometimes had them arrested. The authorities usually prosecuted those who joined the resistance after the announcement of amnesty and then surrendered within its time frame.[47] Refusal to be a police informer could lead to accusations of helping the guerrillas and subsequent arrest. Wealthy former insurgents were deported as *kulaks* even if they cooperated fully. Therefore, some subsequent arrests of amnestied guerrillas targeted those who violated the conditions of their pardon, some broke the promises given to them, and some stemmed from general Soviet policy.

However, few draft dodgers suffered any consequences except a criminal record. The government promptly sent them and most of those who admitted to being guerrillas to regular Red Army units as normal Soviet citizens. It let fugitives unfit for military service go home, with certificates stating "Citizen … turned himself in to NKVD and is not liable to detention or arrest for his past deeds. He is eligible to live freely at the place of his former residence. Citizen … must report for registration at the police district station on the 15th and 30th of each month." Some insurgents received pardon for the second time after they had violated the conditions of the first one and returned to the guerrillas.[48] The archives contain no information about the number of guerrillas arrested after they had been pardoned. In fact, they rarely mention such arrests. More often, the police wrote about amnestied guerrillas who "atoned for their crimes" through "honest work." Some even advanced within the new social system. Colonel

[45] Leont'ev to Kruglov (18 February 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 354, l. 108; see also GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 20; RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 145, l. 436; RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 20, l. 8; TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1730, l. 50.

[46] Henriks Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands in den Jahren des Kommunismus (1940–1990)," *Acta Baltica* 31:86–87, 1993.

[47] Document No. 16 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, pp. 120–123; Document No. 92 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7, p. 458; M. Slon', secretary of the Stanislav Party Provincial Committee, to Khrushchev, "Otchet o likvidatsii bandformirovanii i podpol'ia OUN [Report on the destruction of OUN bandit units and the underground]" (August 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1697, l. 245.

[48] Document No. 60 in Sergei Zubrenkov, ed., *Lesnye brat'ia* (Moscow: Panorama, 1995), p. 155; Document No. 9 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 416.

Grushko reprimanded subordinates unwilling to appoint amnestied guerrillas as police officers: "Some heads of district NKVD stations say: 'How can we trust him, a former bandit, and make him a boss?' Excuse me, but you are wrong – we can and should trust people who have turned themselves in and proved their loyalty to our cause."[49] The district police officer was the only pillar of authority in remote regions. That an NKVD colonel favored appointing former guerrillas to this position shows that the state often honored its promises of pardon. Rostyslav Kulchitskyi, a converted UPA guerrilla severely wounded in an operation against his former comrades, was appointed to the important position of passport officer.[50] At least one person, Rykva, who, in the words of a police officer, had been "closely associated with OUN" during the German occupation became a member of the Ukrainian Supreme Council.[51] NKVD directives demanded that confiscated property of the amnestied guerrillas be restored, although this was hard to accomplish when other villagers and corrupt officials had appropriated it. Sometimes the police promised to protect families of the former insurgents from retaliation and find them apartments and jobs in other regions. When it failed to give an apartment outside the rebellious region to "Orlik," a former provincial OUN officer, the latter boldly accused the authorities of breaking their word. His letter reached Khrushchev, and the police were ordered to fulfill their pledges.[52]

No generalizations can be made about Soviet perfidy because the government treated each case individually. Its decisions depended on the fugitives' social and economic background and their record before and after amnesty. Most peasants who claimed to have been involuntarily drafted by the guerrillas or to have fled conscription and who later fought in the Red Army, militia, or commando units received full pardon. Some insurgents – notorious leaders of the resistance, former guerrillas suspected of subversion after their surrender, those refusing to cooperate with the police, or belonging to wealthy families or those whom the police simply picked to fill deportation quotas – were arrested.

Conclusion

The principles of Soviet amnesty policy were formulated during the civil war. Marxist ideology led the government to view any adversary not as a homogeneous force but as a mixture of classes with conflicting interests. By the

[49] "Protokol zasedannia sekretarei RK [Meeting of the secretaries of the district party committees]" (24 November 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 202, l. 36.

[50] Document No. 4 in Jeffrey Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura* (Moscow: Sovremennaia Istoriia, 2006), p. 275.

[51] "Spravka o vrazhdebnykh deistviiakh kulachestva [Report on *kulaks*' hostile actions]" (before August 1946), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 424, ll. 77, 78.

[52] Slon' to Khrushchev, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (16 June 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1717, ll. 1–13.

time the Red Army had reoccupied the western borderlands, the Communists had accumulated much experience in inducing enemy soldiers to desert. They extended this policy to the nationalist guerrillas, seeking to detach all those who were not bitter foes from the hardcore fighters. Soviet amnesties had a clear class orientation. The authorities appealed first of all to "socially proximate" insurgents who had joined the resistance because they were forced to or who lacked the class consciousness to identify their "true enemies." While propaganda and social reforms aimed to awaken the class consciousness of peasant guerrillas, amnesties let them return to civilian life. With time, the amnesties became more comprehensive and were also directed at insurgent leaders, though a private from a poor family could receive genuine pardon more easily than a commander or a wealthier peasant. Ideology and pragmatism limited the vindictiveness of the regime. The authorities would not have achieved much better results had they always kept their word. The state cannot eliminate resistance by amnesty alone, even if it meticulously honors its guarantees, because some guerrillas are motivated, whereas others fear their comrades' reprisals for desertion or doubt the government's declarations. The success of amnesty depends on a government's sincerity and the prospects of resistance. The insurgent surrenders if he believes his cause is lost and amnesty offers fewer risks than struggle. Even though guerrillas doubted that the Soviet state would keep its promise to pardon them, many accepted the risk because the alternative was even grimmer.

8

Red *Rurales*

The Destruction Battalions

> The struggle against banditry cannot be waged separately from class struggle.[1]
>
> – Vladimir Shcherbakov, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania

In order to suppress resistance in the western borderlands, the Soviet state armed thousands of local peasants who fought the insurgents side by side with the regular forces. This chapter explains why the government organized militia from populations it mistrusted and investigates the social composition of the Soviet paramilitaries, their motivations to enlist, the difference between the militias operating in the old territories and in the borderlands, and the problems that the government experienced with those in the western regions. The militia suffered from grave flaws and often remained merely an antiguerrilla tool rather than a law enforcement agency, but it was, nevertheless, a vital component of the Soviet pacification.

Every government fights guerrillas primarily with its army and police. The army is an appropriate means against rebels operating in large formations, but it is ineffective against fragmented resistance focusing on terror against local administrators. In rebellious rural regions, the army most often is alien, its personnel recruited from all over the country and lacking expertise in local affairs and culture. Unable to identify the insurgents, soldiers vent their frustrations on peasants, thus driving them to support the guerrillas. Police are better suited to counterinsurgency, being submerged in the local milieu, but they usually lack the manpower needed to cover an entire rebellious area, whereas dispersal in garrisons reduces their offensive capabilities and leaves the initiative to the guerrillas. It is financially prohibitive to increase police to the size needed to fight a large insurgency on their own.

[1] Vladimir Shcherbakov (23 November 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 19, l. 36.

Most governments involved in pacification supplement their regular security agencies with paramilitary units raised from local civilians. Such militias cannot replace the police, but they can perform some missions more effectively than the police. One such task is the destruction of insurgent infrastructure, made up of civilian agents of guerrillas who collect supplies and intelligence, spread propaganda, recruit new fighters, perform medical services, and maintain contact with urban resistance. Paramilitary fighters, members of the rural community, naturally possess the intelligence the army lacks and the police acquire only with great effort. Security agencies therefore use paramilitaries not so much against the guerrillas as against the infrastructure on which they rely.

Another function of a militia is the protection of villages from remnants of guerrillas who have survived major counterinsurgency operations conducted by regular security forces. The government can suppress insurgency effectively even if it does not defeat it militarily so long as the guerrillas are isolated from the population. Militias are better suited to this mission than army and police because they are cheap, their fighters are usually employed part time, and their rewards are less than police wages. A militia network extensive enough to block the guerrillas from every village is therefore financially viable. Consequently, the government can apply efficient clear-and-hold tactics, that is, have regular security forces cleanse a region of larger insurgent units and leave the paramilitaries to protect it. The militia garrisons deprive the guerrilla remnants of supplies, limit their ability to disseminate propaganda while letting the government spread its own, and allow the civilian administration to function and institutionalize social reforms intended to secure the support of peasants. Meanwhile, the army methodically expands its counterinsurgency operations to the next guerrilla-infested region.[2]

Any state is uneasy about the risks of arming civilians against insurgency. If militia cannot match the guerrillas in combat, it may inadvertently supply the resistance with weapons. Loyalty of militia is often uncertain. Finally, a civilian administration must supervise closely even loyal paramilitaries to ensure that they fight the guerrillas but do not cripple law and order. Disgruntled with minimal rewards or intoxicated with power, militia may engage in plundering or random violence, thus frustrating the government's effort to attract the peasants. The ability to monitor paramilitaries is essential to their successful employment, yet authorities usually cannot do this precisely because it is the weakness of government institutions that requires them to raise a militia. However, prolonged pacification campaigns overstretch regular security agencies, forcing states to accept the risks involved in the use of a militia. Their employment brought mixed results. The overall balance was positive if the government (1) secured loyalists who received substantial benefits, (2) realized

[2] This counterinsurgency tactic has been applied successfully by the British colonial administration in Malaya; John Coates, *Suppressing Insurgency: An Analysis of the Malayan Emergency, 1948–1954* (Oxford, England: Westview Press, 1992).

the problems involved with militia and was strong enough to promptly solve them, (3) integrated the efforts of regular agencies and militia in missions natural to each of them, and finally, (4) could balance quantity and quality by recruiting a paramilitary force that was large enough to garrison most of the countryside but that still could be trained and paid well.

When Soviet command and control disintegrated in the first days of the German invasion, the General Staff attributed it to enemy paratroopers. It found that police alone could not control the frontline areas. On 24 June 1941, the Council of People's Commissars issued a directive entitled, "Measures against Enemy Paratroopers and Saboteurs in the Near-Front Regions," that prescribed the formation of people's militia called *destruction battalions* (*istrebitel'nye batal'ony*). These units, 100 to 200 men strong, were raised on a territorial basis by city and district party committees near the front under a central NKVD Destruction Battalion Headquarters. Thus regional party agencies organized the destruction battalions and recruited the personnel, whereas police planned and coordinated their operations. Militia commanders were to be selected from among police officers, party and Komsomol functionaries, firefighters, city administrators, and collective farm managers.[3] The party controlled the militia through political commissars, usually the second secretaries of city or district party committees, attached to every battalion.

The militia was raised from persons excluded from military service. Usually, fighters retained their civilian jobs and were called for service one or two days a week, but in emergencies, they served full time. Fighters could be factory workers employed in the defense industry, retired Communists, university students, or Komsomol teenagers. Many, perhaps most, were underage or too old or unfit to serve in the army. Between 10 and 15 percent of them were women. Fighters were enlisted on a semivoluntary basis; the party pressed them to join, but many could decline without punishment because of age or disability. By August 1941, 328,000 men and women served in destruction battalions.[4]

The militia initially was intended not for counterinsurgency but to fight enemy saboteurs and to guard bridges, factories, railways, and wire communication lines. If it spotted enemy paratroopers, it was supposed to attack them "with all available weapons. If no firearms are available, [the paratroopers] should be destroyed in hand-to-hand combat by cold steel: pitchforks, bayonets fixed to sticks, axes, sabers, etc."[5] In the borderlands, however, counterinsurgency became the militia's major mission. When the German invasion

[3] P. Trofimov, commander of the Destruction Battalions, to L. Beria, "Otchet o sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batalionov [Actions of the destruction battalions]" (10 March 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 276, ll. 1, 2, 6, 7, 16.

[4] Trofimov, "Otchet o sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batalionov," l.10; V. F. Shauro et al., eds., *Vsenarodnoe partizanskoe dvizhenie v Belorussii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny*. Dokumenty i materialy, Book 2, Vol. 1 (Minsk: Belarus', 1967), p. 48. S. Stepashin, ed., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, Vol. 2, Book 1 (Moscow: Rus', 2000), p. 65.

[5] Document No. 300 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 2, Book 1, p. 58.

triggered anti-Soviet armed resistance there, the destruction battalions were the primary force available against it to protect rural civilian administrations. In Estonia, 6,400 militiamen, organized in 19 destruction battalions and three worker militia regiments and reinforced by 2,400 militiamen retreating from Latvia, engaged an approximately equal number of nationalists in a brutal civil war that claimed over 2,000 lives. Destruction battalions also clashed with German vanguards and showed impressive determination when they held defense lines on the flanks of Soviet regular units and then, being cut off, broke out of the pockets. Many of them retreated with the Red Army; others turned to guerrilla warfare but were soon destroyed. The Estonian nationalist insurgents lost 819 fighters dead and missing in the summer of 1941, whereas pro-Soviet Estonian militiamen lost, according to incomplete Soviet data, at least 475 men and women killed and 50 missing in action; in addition, Germans executed 1,500 apprehended militiamen.[6] In many regions, however, the party had no time to organize destruction battalions, or they functioned for a short time only. As the Germans approached, the authorities disbanded most of them and either evacuated their personnel along with their factories or else conscripted them into the army. About 20 percent of militia, reinforced by local party and Komsomol leaders and policemen, were ordered to remain in the enemy rear and become guerrillas.[7] The Soviet partisan movement in 1941–1942 consisted of three major components: the first and largest was cut-off soldiers under regular military commanders; the second and smallest, but specially trained for sabotage actions, was the NKVD and NKGB commando groups; and the third was units converted from destruction battalions.

After the Soviets reoccupied the western borderlands and NKVD security divisions destroyed large guerrilla formations and forced them to disperse into platoons or sections, the insurgents engaged primarily in terror against village administrators, police informers, police district officers, and supporters of the Soviet authorities. These part-time guerrillas, possessing excellent intelligence, assassinated whom they chose and then vanished into the village community. Security troops arriving from the district center the next day hit the air. Until the end of the war, the NKVD divisions had no manpower to expand

[6] Indrek Paalve and Peeter Kaasik, "Destruction Battalions in Estonia in 1941," in Toomas Hiio, Meelis Maripuu, and Indrek Paavle, eds., *Estonia 1940–1945* (Tallinn: Estonian Foundation for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006), pp. 478–489; Tiit Noormets, "The Summer War: The 1941 Armed Resistance in Estonia," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 2000), p. 205. The Estonian Home Guard *Omakaitse* numbered 9,175 men and women in July and 14,730 in August 1941, but only between a third and half of them were armed; Colonel Maide, chief of the *Omakaitse* Head Section, "Svodka deiatel'nosti Omakaitse v 1941 g. [Actions of *Omakaitse* in 1941]" (1941), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 452, l. 80; Peeter Kaasik and Mika Raudvassar, "Estonia from June to October 1941," in Hiio et al., *Estonia,* p. 497.

[7] Anatolii S. Chaikovskii, "Pomoshch' sovetskogo tyla v organizatsii partizanskoi bor'by protiv fashistskikx zakhvatchikov na vremenno okkupirovannoi territorii SSSR 1941–1944," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kiev, 1991, p. 403.

garrisons beyond district centers.[8] After the front rolled beyond the Soviet frontiers, most NKVD troops followed. Too few security divisions remained behind to suppress insurgency, roughly five in western Ukraine, two or three in Belorussia, one or two in Lithuania, one in Latvia, and one in Estonia.[9] It was impossible to eradicate resistance without permanent garrisons because the police were spread too thinly and could not protect most villages, let alone homesteads. As soon as the NKVD troops left the region, the remnants of guerrillas resumed their actions and replaced their losses with new recruits. Being short of manpower, security agencies had to accept the risk of raising a peasant militia from recruits whose loyalty they questioned.

Another motivation for organizing a peasant militia was to boost the efficiency of police agencies. Since the Stalinists engaged in a social revolution in the borderlands, they mistrusted policemen who had served there before the Soviet occupation and fired them. The security troops and most district police officers in the western regions came from the old territories. Lithuanians constituted 10.4 percent of the Lithuanian MGB and 14.3 percent of the MVD officers in 1946, whereas Estonians made up one-third of the police operating in Estonia by 1953 and only 10 percent of the police station heads; earlier, their proportion probably was even lower.[10] Moscow realized that the police officers from the old territories were inefficient because they did not understand the local mentality and language; in addition, the overwhelming domination of ethnic Russians in the police force helped nationalists to promote their cause. The Communist leaders in the western provinces issued numerous directives ordering enlistment of politically reliable local men into the police; however, few reliable persons were available.[11] The government attempted to cope with this problem by employing Red partisans in counterinsurgency. These reliable and skilled fighters, recruited partially among the borderland population, adapted to local conditions more easily than did the security troops. Khrushchev reported to Stalin that he decided to organize at every district NKVD station units of 50 to 60 men from partisans. By 3 March 1944, he organized 19 units with 1,581 men.[12] This idea apparently belonged to Aleksei

[8] In Lithuania, for instance, the security troops established 200 permanent small garrisons only in March 1946. Earlier, no garrisons existed outside district centers; Juozas Starkauskas, "The NKVD-MVD-MGB-Army," in Anušauskas, *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States,* pp. 47, 50.

[9] Other security units located in the borderlands, as frontier guards, occasionally participated in counterinsurgency operations.

[10] Documents No.7 and 12 in Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody (1944–1956)* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), pp. 286, 313; calculated from Ludas Truska, *Lietuva: 1938–1953 metais* (Kaunas: Šviesa, 1995), p. 139; Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), p. 331.

[11] Documents No. 1.41, 4.15, and 4.21 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m.* (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), Vol. 1, p. 201; Vol. 2, pp. 101, 132.

[12] Volodymyr Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996), p. 144.

Fedorov, commander of a partisan brigade, who in January 1944 requested from Khrushchev to retain two or three partisan brigades in western Ukraine to cleanse it of UPA.[13] Borovets noticed that partisans were a more dangerous enemy than the German security forces.[14] In 1944, 1,205 partisans fought nationalists in western Belorussia and 10,000 in western Ukraine. Next year, their comrades in Latvia and Lithuania also engaged guerrillas.[15] They performed well in search-and-destroy missions against full-time guerrilla bands but not against small cells, whose members lived as ordinary farmers and gathered only for missions of individual terror. In order to eradicate fragmented insurgency, the security agencies needed local knowledge. Aleksandr Rezev, the Estonian people's commissar of internal affairs, wrote

> It is necessary to have units that know well the terrain and the local culture. The two NKVD security regiments that stay in Estonia ... are unfamiliar with the local conditions and customs. The NKVD destruction battalions can fight small [guerrilla] bands quite effectively; they can isolate bandits and the armed underground, and their employment has already yielded good results.[16]

Above all, Soviet pacification strategists insisted on raising peasant militia because they interpreted the insurgency primarily as a class conflict. Mikhail Suslov, head of VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, maintained that "banditry cannot be destroyed and the bourgeois-nationalist underground cannot be successfully eradicated by police and army operations alone, without raising the masses against them."[17] Janis Kalnberziņš, first secretary of the Latvian Communist party believed the destruction battalions had to be the "front-line troops" in the counterinsurgency campaign.[18] Thus the authorities organized destruction battalions because the NKVD was short of manpower and appreciated the value of a local militia against a fragmented insurgency but also because Soviet leaders sought to turn suppression by the security agencies into a class war in which poor peasants sponsored by the government would join a fight against the rural nationalist bourgeoisie.

[13] Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), p. 225; Begma to Khrushchev, "O deistviiax ukrainskikh natsionalistov [Actions of the Ukrainian nationalists]" (5 March 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 930, l. 66.

[14] Taras Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy* (Winnipeg, Canada: Volyn, 1981), p. 243.

[15] Document No. 295 in V. A. Zolotarev, ed., *Russkii arkhiv. Velikaia Otechestvennaia,* Vol. 9 (Moscow: Terra, 1999), p. 495; Documents No. 22, 41, and 50 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), pp. 54–56, 105, 144; Geoffrey Swain, "Divided We Fall: Division within the National Partisans of Vidzeme and Latgale, Fall 1945," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 38(2):195, 2007; Stanislav A. Vaupshasov, *Na trevozhnykh perekrestkakh* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1988).

[16] General Rezev, people's commissar of internal affairs of Estonia (5 January 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 563, l. 2.

[17] Mikhail Suslov, "O nedostatkakh i oshibkakh v rabote partiinoi organizatsii Litovskoi SSR [Flaws and errors of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 40, 41.

[18] Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p. 169.

On 1 December 1944, Destruction Battalion Headquarters was subordinated to the Head NKVD Directorate for the Struggle against Banditry [*Glavnoe upravlenie po bor'be s banditizmom NKVD SSSR* (GUBB)], making counterinsurgency the primary mission of the militia. The strength of the "battalions" depended on the guerrillas' tactics. Initially, when guerrillas fought in large formations, 100- to 150-man militia units operated as an NKVD auxiliary. After these formations were destroyed and most NKVD troops had left, the militia had to protect large areas against small guerrilla cells. They were dispersed in 25- to 50-man platoons, sometimes even in 10- to 12-man sections in district centers and large villages. As a rule, the police district section commanded the destruction battalion, whereas party agencies, after consultation with the police, selected commanders of the smaller militia units from petty officials, party or Komsomol members, or activists.

The destruction battalions in the western regions differed from their eastern counterparts in composition, mission, and importance among security agencies. Most destruction battalions in the east stayed in towns and moved to the countryside only in an emergency. They consisted largely of urban people augmented by rural activists. Western destruction battalions confronted a rural guerrilla war; they were based in the countryside, and their fighters were predominantly peasants. The directives of 1941 ordering militia to be "raised from absolutely reliable party, Komsomol, and Soviet activists"[19] could not be followed literally in the west. There, the Soviet administration was weak, especially in the rural regions, and Communists were few. In 1944, 34.3 percent of destruction battalion fighters in the old territories were party and Komsomol members compared with 8.2 percent in Estonia and Lithuania and 3.2 percent in Latvia.[20] In the east, recruits were picked from those who had proven their loyalty. In the west, the police and party lacked the information on the peasants to allow thorough screening. The pool of reliable candidates was meager, and selection criteria were low.

Eastern and western destruction battalions performed different tasks in different social environments. The former were police auxiliaries with the same primary missions as they had had in 1941: to guard installations and communications lines against enemy saboteurs and to hunt deserters and criminals. They faced uncoordinated actions of small criminal gangs or a few enemy agents. They could trust their comrades and operated amid a friendly population that supplied intelligence and help. The fighters were indoctrinated, and their morale was high. Service was not a great burden – criminals and deserters offered little resistance – and provided a break from the 12-hour, 7-day-a-week factory routine. In the east, destruction battalions suffered few casualties, and the proportion of killed and wounded was similar to that of a regular army.

[19] Document No. 66 in S. Ia. Afteniuk et al., eds., *Moldavskaia SSR v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine Sovetskogo Soiuza*, Vol. 1 (Kishinev: Shtiintsa, 1975), pp. 61, 62.

[20] Colonel Trofimov to Beria (10 March 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 276, l. 12; Trofimov (December 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 70, l. 141.

The primary mission of western destruction battalions was counterinsurgency, mainly the elimination of insurgent infrastructure, isolation of guerrillas from the population, and defense of the Soviet rural administration. UPA and several Lithuanian resistance groups established a sophisticated civilian support network, which the Soviets sought to disrupt. Militia became the third-leading source of intelligence for the police, after agents implanted in guerrilla units and the informer network. Militia also patrolled outskirts of villages and fields, intercepting guerrilla liaison agents; served as guides and scouts for the police; and sometimes participated in offensive operations, usually under direct police command. In the case of attack by guerrillas, the militia had to defend the village council or police station until it was relieved by units arriving from neighboring villages or by police from the district center. Destruction battalions took over most of the routine defensive counterinsurgency in the western regions, enabling security troops to concentrate on missions for which they were best suited: search-and-destroy operations against full-time guerrilla units.

In the western borderlands, militia faced a courageous, motivated, and sometimes well-trained enemy. They could expect all sorts of tricks from their neighbors and treason from their comrades. The western destruction battalions suffered heavy casualities; the death rate for militia in 1945 was 50 times greater in Lithuania than in Belorussia, most of which was pre-1939 Soviet territory. The proportion between wounded and killed was opposite to that of conventional warfare: In western Ukraine during 1944, destruction battalions lost five killed to every wounded; in Lithuania during 1945, the ratio of dead to wounded was three to one (Table 8.1).

This abnormal proportion of casualties occurred in part because small destruction garrisons operated in remote regions without access to medical assistance but mostly because guerrillas and militia both slaughtered captured wounded fighters and prisoners. A Soviet officer reported from Rovno Province:

> On 19 February [1945] a 39-man militia unit was engaged in combat in Toncha Village. At 3 p.m. a 100-man band and 50-man cavalry [unit] surrounded the militia. Of 39 fighters, 21 surrendered. ... The bandits massacred the prisoners: They hanged them by their family homes. Before hanging them by their feet, they made a grisly bloodbath, chopping off their ears and tongues.[21]

Militia and guerrillas often commit more atrocities than regular forces because they are driven by personal animosities toward some villagers, and their commanders cannot or will not prevent them from crossing the threshold of cruelty set by their political leaders. Paramilitaries target not only their armed opponents but also their families. GUBB files contain many reports like this one from the Lithuanian NKVD:

> During the night of 13 April [1946] in Simnas District [Alytus Province], a number of terrorist acts were committed against militia families. As a result, the mother of a

[21] N. D. Plotnikov, "Smertonostsy," *VIZ* 3:59, 1991.

TABLE 8.1 *Strength of the Destruction Battalions and Their Attrition Rate*

Region	Strength		Average Strength, 1945	Casualties in 1945, (for Latvia without January) by Category: Killed, Wounded, and Missing			Attrition Rate (Ratio of Casualties to the Average Strength) in 1945 by Category: Killed, Wounded, and Missing			Total Attrition Rate in 1945
	1 Jan. 1945	1 Jan. 1946		K	W	M	K	W	M	
Bel.	16,062	15,055	15,559	29	23	3	0.19%	0.15%	0.02%	0.36%
Lith.	2,442	8,216	5,329	510	181	131	9.57%	3.4%	2.46%	15.43%
Lat.	5,758	15,720	10,739	200	143	22	2.03%	1.45%	0.22%	3.7%
Est.	1,653	5,804	3,729	39	36	1	1.05%	0.97%	0.03%	2.05%
W. Uk.	23,906	39,727	31,817	755	375	429	2.37%	1.18%	1.35%	4.9%

Source: Compiled from GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319; d. 561, ll. 274, 275; Zadoia, deputy head of the GUBB, "Spravka o nashikh poteriakh pri bandproiavleniiakh [Our casualties due to bandit attacks]" (5 April 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 349, l. 3. Statistics on Belorussia refer to the whole territory of the republic.

fighter, I. Metialis; two of his sisters, 13 and 15 years old; two brothers, 6 and 15 years old; [and also] the father and the mother of a fighter, V. Mitkauskas; and two of his brothers, 10 and 20 years old, were killed.[22]

The militia replied in kind. During the first half of 1946, the destruction battalions of Stanislav Province, Ukraine, claimed to have killed 122 "bandit accomplices," unarmed civilians, versus 38 guerrillas.[23]

Formally, destruction battalions were volunteer formations, but party and Komsomol members and petty administrators were conscripted, and Soviet officials compelled some peasants to join the militia.[24] However, reports of compulsory drafts are rare,[25] and such drafts are described as a violation of the official policy by local authorities. In fact, police files and nationalist documents indicate that most fighters joined voluntarily. The Estonian and Latvian police complained that they could not raise enough militia because few people volunteered, but they did not suggest conscription as a solution. Those disappointed with service conditions could quit.[26]

Initially, militia fighters were unpaid. What motivated farmers, most of whom were uneasy about Soviet authority, to accept this dangerous job? Many were driven to destruction battalions by guerrilla terror, which discouraged some people from supporting the Soviet administration but forced others to fight back. The militia recruited volunteers from relatives of men conscripted into the Red Army; demobilized Soviet soldiers; peasants evading draft into nationalist guerrilla units; amnestied insurgents; specialists arriving from the eastern regions; persons suspected by guerrillas, rightly or wrongly, of being police informants; reluctant appointees to the position of village council chair; those striving to avenge relatives killed by guerrillas; and ethnic minorities targeted by the nationalists. Most Poles disliked the Soviet regime, but they enlisted en masse. Some moved straight from AK to the destruction battalions, viewing them as their only protection amid a hostile majority. In Drogobych Province, Poles made up 40 percent of the destruction battalions' personnel.[27] The UPA feared the Polish militia more than the police. Farmers who received

[22] Leont'ev to A. Apollonov, head of NKVD Security Troops Directorate, "Operativnaia svodka Nr. 84 [Operative report no. 84]" (17 April 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 572, l. 43.

[23] General Burmak, commander of the Frontier Guards of the Ukrainian Military District, to Kruglov, "O Stanislavskoi oblasti [On Stanislav Province]" (7 April 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 131.

[24] Documents No. 3.7 and 3.8 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, pp. 304, 308–310.

[25] Document No. 48 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), pp. 238, 239.

[26] Document No. 26 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny*, pp. 481, 482; Documents No. 43 and 61 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3, pp. 205, 247; "Klim," "Informatyvnyi zvit z bil'shovits'koi diinosti [Report on the Bolsheviks' actions]" (30 August 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 926, ll. 50–52; GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, ll. 55, 184, 347; Document No. 30 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 69; Document No. 3.7 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, p. 303.

[27] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 174.

land confiscated from their wealthier neighbors defended their property and elevated their social status by joining destruction battalions. Militia members were deferred from conscription into the Red Army, and many peasants calculated, correctly, that they were more likely to survive in destruction battalions than at the front. Opportunists supplied another pool of recruits. Some volunteers viewed membership in the paramilitary force as a vehicle for upward social mobility. The leaders of the western regions instructed the local authorities to regard destruction battalions as "an important reserve for promotion to responsible posts in the administration and the party" and also to appoint good fighters as district police officers, a dangerous but prestigious position.[28] Once opportunists sided with the government, they automatically became a target for guerrillas and had to fight them. Some people enlisted simply because a man with a gun in government service enjoyed prestige, power, and the means to secure privileges, even though this contradicted the policy of the authorities. People therefore joined the destruction battalions for four reasons: Party and Komsomol members were conscripted, but most volunteered because of guerrilla terror, support for Soviet reforms, and opportunism.

Like every government that relies on paramilitary forces, Soviet security agencies confronted problems of training, loyalty, and control. Pressed by the urgent necessity to fight widespread insurgency, the NKVD expanded its paramilitaries. During 1945, the strength of the militia increased by 170 percent in western Ukraine, 270 percent in Latvia, 340 percent in Lithuania, and 350 percent in Estonia (Table 8.2).

This rapid expansion outstripped the NKVD's ability to train personnel. The authorities had not been able to introduce universal military training in the borderlands; soldiers recruited from the western regions and discharged after being wounded often were appointed to command destruction platoons in which they were the only ones with military training. Moreover, many fighters were physically weak or suffered from disability because most able-bodied men had been drafted into the Red Army. The party orders stated that destruction battalions had to be formed primarily from teenagers, seniors, women, those discharged from the army after being severely wounded, or those unfit to serve in the army.[29]

In its haste to raise militiamen in 1945, the NKVD limited their training to 64 hours: 7 for the study of weaponry, 4 each for shooting practice and the study of Red Army field manuals, 12 for useless parade drill, 16 for political indoctrination, and only 6 for counterinsurgency tactics such as setting ambushes, patrolling, forest combing, and sentry duties.[30] Since the NKVD

[28] Eismont to Leont'ev (15 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 198; Document No. 13 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 245.

[29] Document No. 111 in Elmars Pelakus, ed. *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia* (Riga: Nordik, 1999), p. 230.

[30] Colonel Kupriianov, "Tematika programmy obucheniia riadovogo sostava istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Training manual for destruction battalion privates]" (27 May 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 523, ll. 7, 8.

TABLE 8.2 *Growing Strength of the Destruction Battalions (DBs) and the Neighborhood Watch Units (NWUs), 1945–1946*

Region	1 January 1945			1 January 1946		
	DB Fighters	NWU Members	Total	DB Fighters	NWU Members	Total
Belorussia	16,062	43,288	59,350	15,055	41,319	56,374
Lithuania	2,442	2,511	4,953	8,216	5,068	13,284
Latvia	5,758	2,725	8,483	15,720	341	16,061
Estonia	1,653	–	1,653	5,804	371	6,175
W. Ukraine	23,906	24,025	47,931	39,727	26,000	65,727
Total	49,821	72,549	122,370	84,522	73,099	157,621

Source: Compiled from GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319; d. 561. Statistics on Belorussia refer to the whole territory of the republic. Neighborhood watch units (*gruppy sodeistviia istrebitel'nym batal'onam*) were teams of lightly armed village activists who collected intelligence for the destruction battalions, patrolled their villages at night, and could be mobilized for counterinsurgency operations. Their major task was to assist the destruction battalions rather than to fight.

did not foresee insurgency in the Soviet Union, no counterinsurgency training manuals existed. Battalions had just one to three police officers and no NCOs to supervise subsequent training. These officers were rarely able to drill fighters because they stayed in district centers while their men were garrisoned in remote villages. Fighters in the western regions were independent peasants who were willing to fight against immediate danger, but if they saw none, they preferred to work at their farms instead of train. They refused any exercises from the beginning of sowing season until the end of the harvest. Hence the combat capacity of the militia was poor. Incidents of friendly fire between destruction units from neighboring villages or security troops were common, and inexperience in the use of firearms produced heavy noncombat losses, causing, for example, 13 percent of all deaths and 25 percent of all wounds suffered by Lithuanian destruction battalions in April 1945. In November 1945, 36 percent of deaths in Lithuanian units and 16.2 percent of all casualties in Latvian units were accidental.[31]

Initially, destruction battalions were poorly armed. In Belorussia, only two-thirds of the fighters had guns, and even in Lithuania, where resistance was strong, only four of five fighters were armed.[32] They had few automatic

[31] Colonel Gusev, head of BB Section of Lithuanian NKVD, to Leontiev, "Svedeniia o boevoi i sluzhebnoi deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Actions of Destruction Battalions]" (12 May 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.319, l.89; Burylin, Head of BB Section of Lithuanian NKVD, to Leontiev, "Svedeniia ob operativno-boevoi i sluzhebnoi deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Actions of Destruction Battalions]" (13 December 1945), GARF, f.9478, op.1, d.319, l.306; Korneev, Head of BB Section of Latvian NKVD, to Leontiev, "Svedeniia ob operativno-boevoi i sluzhebnoi deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Actions of destruction battalions]" (18 December 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 304.

[32] GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319.

weapons and various trophy rifles that needed unmatched ammunition, often unavailable. The Latvian NKVD was skeptical about the combat efficiency of its destruction units. A local official reported that those in Abrene Province "make an extremely sad impression. Their personnel consists of boys. Of course, this is not the fault of the local administration because it was impossible to find better personnel. … The units are poorly armed, and the weapons are poor: old rifles, few machine guns. … They are ill-trained."[33] Such green and underarmed fighters faced a formidable enemy. The UPA had accumulated considerable combat experience against the Soviet partisans, the Axis, the AK, the Soviet police, and the Red Army. The Baltic guerrillas, led by professional officers, included many soldiers of national armies and national guards trained to fight Soviet partisans, and many Ukrainian and Baltic guerrillas had served in SS divisions or German auxiliary police.

The ability of the destruction battalions to fight insurgents varied in the western regions. Weaponry and training are important but not always decisive in a civil war. Its outcome is defined above all by motivation, policy toward the enemy's rank and file, and the population's attitude toward the opponents. In western Ukraine, training and motivation of destruction battalions were inferior to those of the guerrillas; more peasants supported the insurgents than the government in 1944–1945, whereas OUN adopted a pragmatic policy toward the militia. As long as the destruction battalions remained small in number and the police could at least superficially screen and train fighters, authorities were satisfied with their performance. However, in the first half of 1946, the MVD increased the strength of the militia from 39,727 to 63,727 men.[34] Seeking to expand the militia quickly, the police soon exhausted the pool of reliable recruits and enlisted virtually any volunteer with the proper social background, including amnestied guerrillas. This policy brought mixed results. Many former guerrillas fought superbly because the nationalists sought to kill them and their families. OUN, however, used a loose screening procedure to have its guerrillas penetrate destruction battalions and persuade their fighters to switch sides. Earlier, it had directed a massive propaganda and intimidation campaign at Ukrainian police raised by the German administration, many of whom defected to the nationalists in 1943. In 1945–1946, OUN applied the same tactics to the Soviet militia. The single commissar in each battalion could not monitor platoons dispersed across the countryside, and most fighters remained unaffected by propaganda. OUN moved into this ideological vacuum, successfully undermining the militia morale. The average quality of militiamen dropped dramatically precisely as their numbers surged. Vasilii Riasnoi, first deputy minister of the MVD of the USSR, observed:

[33] Janis Diman to Janis Kalnberziņš (6 June 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 4, ll. 101, 102.

[34] Saraev to Leont'ev "Dolkad o sostoianii i operativno-boevoi deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov" [Report on conditions and actions of destruction battalions] (24 june 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 274.

During March and April 1946, militia in the western provinces of Ukraine committed: … (a) purely bandit actions with consequent desertion … ; (b) terrorist acts ordered by the OUN underground … ; (c) they informed the bandits about the best time to attack destruction battalions. … Lately the incidents when militia offered no resistance to the bandits and surrendered their weapons on bandits' demand have become common. … These facts show that the OUN underground and their bands persistently seek to demoralize and disarm destruction battalions.[35]

OUN agents among the militia warned insurgents of forthcoming operations, assassinated commanders of destruction units and police officers, and let guerrillas enter barracks and catch fighters by surprise. Ukrainian BB Section files contain many reports like the following: In the spring of 1946, fighters recruited from amnestied guerrillas in Molod'kovo Village killed the platoon commander, his family, and eight activists; took 4 machine guns, 31 rifles, and 4 submachine guns; and defected to the UPA.[36]

In early 1946, the UPA intensified its campaign against the militia, attacking it 6 times in March, 57 times in April, and 71 times in May. Between 1 January and 30 May 1946 in Stanislav Province alone, guerrillas disarmed 40 militia units of 700 men and captured 605 weapons. The fighters resisted only three times.[37] The UPA had no external supplies of weaponry and ammunition after 1944 and rarely could seize them in clashes with the Red Army and security troops. The guerrillas could acquire weapons most easily through the destruction battalions, which became their armory. Militiamen surrendered without a fight because their morale had already been eroded by OUN agents in their midst, and they doubted whether they could repel an attack of better trained and motivated guerrillas who had good intelligence and could achieve surprise. They also knew that if they were overwhelmed, the guerrillas would slaughter them, whereas they most likely would be spared if they laid down their arms because the UPA, short of weaponry and ammunition, had to treat those whom it considered traitors more gently than it wished. Petr Burmak, commander of the Frontier Guards of the Ukrainian Military District, evaluated the efficiency of many western Ukrainian battalions as "extremely poor."[38]

Despite these flaws, the peasant militia were so central to the Soviet pacification that its strategists refused to disband them. On 18 April 1946, the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist party issued an order

[35] Vasilii Riasnoi to Strokach (20 April 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 523, ll. 1–3.

[36] Asmolov, deputy head of the BB Directorate of the Ukrainian MVD, "Spravka po resheniiu Orgbiuro TsK KP(b)U [Note about a decision of the Organizational Bureau of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (12 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 20; Strokach to Krugov, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh proverki i chistki istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Report on inspection and purge of destruction battalions]" (18 June 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 170.

[37] Strokach to Krugov, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh proverki," l. 171; Burmak, "O Stanislavskoi oblasti," l. 130.

[38] Burmak, "O Stanislavskoi oblasti," l. 131.

entitled, "Improvement of Political Work, Bolshevik Vigilance and the Training of Destruction Battalions in the Western Provinces of Ukraine." Two days later, the MVD issued a similar directive.[39] These two documents initiated new policy, trading quantity for quality in the militia. They ordered a massive purge: "All battalions and district police stations must be cleansed of OUN members, bandit accomplices, *kulaks,* double agents, traitors, marauders, and demoralized elements."[40] By 1 July, 63,712 fighters had been screened in western Ukraine and almost half (47.4 percent) purged: 1.2 percent were arrested, 15 percent were expelled as suspicious, and 31.2 percent were found unfit or demoralized.[41] After this, small-scale purges became routine, and screening procedures were improved. The MVD instructed police officers to enlist a fighter in a destruction battalion only after they had obtained references about him from two other fighters or from local residents who had proven their allegiance.[42] The police applied a mafia-style method to secure loyalty by forcing militiamen into actions that meant the guerrillas would kill them if captured. Timofei Strokach, the MVD minister of Ukraine, demanded that "every fighter must be involved in arrests of OUN members, searches, deportations of their families, [and] confiscations of OUN depots and weapons."[43] Meanwhile, the state punished defectors' relatives, following Riasnoi's directive: "The families of militia traitors should be routinely and immediately repressed: that is, arrested and deported to Siberia. … Every case of disarmament of a militia unit or separate fighters by bandits must be carefully investigated, and if it is established that they offered no proper resistance, they should be arrested and court-martialed."[44] Fighters who could prove they were disarmed in battle were pardoned. Most of those who could not were released anyway after being jailed and investigated for weeks, but their experience discouraged others from surrendering. Finally, the political indoctrination of militia intensified: One commissar was attached permanently to every platoon.[45] These measures considerably improved the performance of the Ukrainian destruction battalions. Although occasional treason occurred, its scale fell. In the second half of 1946, police arrested 130 fighters as compared with 747 in the first half. Meanwhile, the militia received more automatic weapons, twice as much training, special manuals, and experienced demobilized soldiers driven to the destruction battalions

[39] Asmolov, "Spravka po resheniiu Orgbiuro," l. 20; Colonel Saraev, head of BB Directorate of Ukrainian MVD, to Leontiev (no date), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, ll. 274, 275.

[40] Strokach, "Plan organizatsionno-operativnykh meropriiatii [Plan of actions]" (April 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 33.

[41] Strokach to Kruglov, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh chistki istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Report on the purge in destruction battalions]" (1 June 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 165; Leontiev to Riasnoi (26 July 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, ll. 301, 305.

[42] Strokach to Kruglov (29 April 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 12.

[43] Strokach, "Plan organizatsionno-operativnykh meropriiatii," l. 34.

[44] Riasnoi to UNKVD heads (13 November 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 321, l. 270.

[45] Asmolov, "Spravka po resheniiu Orgbiuro," l. 22.

by guerrilla terror.[46] As Kalyvas observes, "Whatever their initial motivations, with time, many militiamen develop genuine loyalties, at least to one another,"[47] and this happened to the Ukrainian militia. After the authorities improved its quality, they again began expanding it, this time gradually, with more thorough screening, indoctrination and training. By December 1948, 85,421 fighters were serving in the West Ukrainian militia.[48]

Elsewhere, guerrilla movements sometimes also implanted their agents and undermined destruction battalions. However, Baltic guerrillas never penetrated destruction battalions as OUN did, and treason was less common in the Baltic region. Only a resistance with a single political center and an articulated policy toward militia, as in western Ukraine, could systematically plant agents and anti-Soviet propaganda among the fighters. The fragmented Baltic resistance could not pursue a consistent strategy against the destruction battalions. Guerrilla commanders hated the militia and sought to exterminate rather than subvert it. An instruction of the Latvian National Partisan Union ordered the summary execution of all persons caught with "arms for fighting against the independence" of Latvia,[49] and its guerrillas followed this order. Lithuanian guerrillas also killed most militias they captured. In June 1945, a LLA unit operating near Seredešius, Kaunas Province, placed its agent, Vladas Makaras, in a destruction section. Makaras let the guerrillas into the barracks at night when on sentry duty. They captured 12 sleeping fighters, shot them, and left a message attached to a corpse for Soviet security forces: "We settled the score with our own dogs, who betrayed our motherland and our brothers. Dogs should die like dogs. We will not attack you, Soviet soldiers. … You fight because you were ordered."[50] In September 1945, the police killed Juozas Pilenas, platoon commander in the *Vitis* guerrilla band and found his diary with daily entries from mid-July to mid-September. The diary showed that the only action initiated by this band for these two months was an attack on a destruction section; the guerrillas killed all nine fighters of the section.[51] This uncompromising attitude forced Soviet collaborators to fight to the last bullet and helped the government turn counterinsurgency into a civil war.

[46] Major Pastelniak, deputy head of Ukrainian BB Directorate (23 June 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 64; Strokach to Kruglov, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh chistki istrebitel'nykh batal'onov," l. 165; Leontiev to Riasnoi (26 July 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, ll. 301, 305; Lieutenant-Colonel Poliakov, acting head of GUBB to Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 709, ll. 7, 8.

[47] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 100.

[48] Document No. 78 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 6, p. 426.

[49] Document No. 260 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* p. 492.

[50] B. Kobulov, deputy people's commissar of NKGB of the USSR, "Dokladnaia zapiska o khode bor'by s banditizmom [Report on the fight against banditry]" (June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 28.

[51] Document No. 109 in N. I . Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), p. 309.

The quality of Baltic destruction battalions increased along with the ratio of party and Komsomol members among the fighters, rising during 1945 from 3.2 to 7.8 percent in Latvia, 8.2 to 15.7 percent in Estonia, and 8.2 to 17.3 percent in Lithuania.[52] In neither Latvia nor Estonia could the NKVD find enough volunteers for the militia, but those who joined it were reliable fighters. The Estonian NKVD reported no treason committed. Nikolai Shatalin, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia, told Stalin that Latvian destruction battalions "provide a great help to the NKVD and NKGB in the struggle against banditry."[53] The Latvian and Estonian destruction battalions proved adequate against small-scale insurgency. Fights between destruction battalions and guerrillas were most deadly in Lithuania, yet the number of Lithuanian militia grew steadily despite the purge conducted between April and March 1945 that resulted in the discharge of 1,437 fighters, or 13.4 percent of its force.[54] In June 1945, the Lithuanian police wrote, "The overwhelming majority of militia fought the [guerrilla] bands well," a statement the Ukrainian police never dared make. In 1945, the Lithuanian destruction battalions claimed to have killed 3,490 guerrillas and arrested 6,077 guerrillas and 3,571 of their accomplices while losing 822 men: 510 killed, 181 wounded, and 131 missing.[55] The militia was likely to exaggerate the number of guerrillas killed but not those arrested, and it could not understate its own casualties.

The only significant anti-Soviet resistance in western Belorussia was of Polish origin, and most of the population there was anti-Polish. This eased the militia's task. Treason was virtually unknown in Belorussian destruction battalions. Their training was good because many fighters had served with the partisan units. Elsewhere destruction battalions performed mostly defensive missions or acted as police auxiliaries in offensive actions, but the Belorussian militia conducted aggressive and independent counterinsurgency operations. The higher quality of personnel, the favorable social environment, and the AK's ambiguous policy toward armed resistance against the Soviets let militia control the countryside in western Belorussia more effectively than their colleagues did in any other western republic. After the AK disintegrated in early 1945, the NKVD gradually disbanded Belorussian destruction battalions.[56]

[52] Complied from GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 70, l. 141; d. 319, ll. 345, 352, 354.

[53] Shatalin to Stalin (17 May 1945), GARF, f. 17, op. 122, d. 94, l. 90; GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, ll. 185, 251.

[54] Bartašunas, people's commissar of Lithuanian NKVD, to Leontiev, "O sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitelnykh batalionov i grupp sodeistviia [Actions of the destruction battalions and neighborhood watch groups]" (31 July 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 144. Only 59 Lithuanian fighters, or 4.1 percent of the expelled, were arrested as a result of the purge, whereas 713 were enlisted into the Red Army and 665 were discharged.

[55] "Spravka o meropriiatiiakh po usileniiu bor'by s banditizmom v Litovskoi SSR [The steps aimed at intensification of the fight against banditry in Lithuania]" (12 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 7; GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319.

[56] Khoniak, deputy people's commissar of internal affairs of Belorussia (30 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 518, l. 3; Bel'chenko, people's commissar of internal affairs of Belorussia, to Leontiev (16 July 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 156.

Police documents rarely define the ethnic profile of destruction battalions, which suggests that the police considered that criterion unimportant when it recruited militia. The names of fighters show, however, that most of them belonged to local ethnic groups. In 1946, the militia greatly outnumbered the active guerrillas in every western region. If the members of neighborhood watch units are taken into account, the pro-Soviet paramilitaries outnumbered Lithuanian guerrillas three to one.[57]

Militia are usually recruited from farmers, who serve part time, and are raised primarily to make law enforcement cost efficient. The Soviet economy was devastated, and the government sought to minimize militia expenses. The typical fighter in western destruction battalions was an independent farmer. In the regions where resistance was strong, militia had to serve full time for months. Their families were freed from obligatory works and enjoyed a large reduction in the food tax, but until 1946, the fighters were neither paid for service, fed by the state, nor compensated for losses incurred on their farms during their absence. If a fighter's family could not produce enough food, they faced starvation. Furthermore, relatives of killed militiamen received no pensions.[58] Top MVD officers and some bureaucrats realized that the destruction battalions could function well only if their basic needs were met and repeatedly asked the government to give fighters wages, food rations equaling those of city workers, and uniforms. Strokach wrote that a militiaman uniform cost 328.5 rubles and his food ration 139.5 rubles per month, but his monthly wage was only 13 rubles, about 25 times less than that of a worker employed in the Galicia oil fields.[59] These demands fell on deaf ears.

The efficiency of the militia in counterinsurgency depends on the government's ability to make them implement its policy. A state cannot control its paramilitary forces as easily as it can an army or police. The weakness of government agencies in rebellious areas and their dependence on a militia strengthen the latter's position in the regional power structure. In the western provinces, the militia garrisons were fundamental to the survival of fragile Soviet institutions. Indeed, in many smaller villages without police stations

[57] Lieutenant-Colonel Burylin, head of the BB Section of the Lithuanian NKVD, "Dokladnaia zapiska o sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Actions of destruction battalions]" (15 January 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 345; Nijole Gaškaite-Žemaitiene, "The Partisan War in Lithuania from 1944 to 1953," in Anušauskas, *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States,* p. 34.

[58] Document No. 7 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 648; Kobulov to Beria (18 May 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 114; Colonel Balashov (1 December 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 321, l. 230; Colonel Sieks, deputy people's commissar of internal affairs of Latvia, to Leont'ev (10 July 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 135; Document No. 3.7 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, p. 304.

[59] GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, ll. 253, 323, 328; Strokach, "Spravka [Report]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23. d. 1849, l. 118; Strokach, "Raschet perevoda na kazarmennoe polozhenie lichnogo sostava istrebitel'nukh batal'onov [Expenses for keeping militia personnel in barracks]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23. d. 1849, l. 120; OUN, "Zvit Nr. 10 [Report no. 10]" (10 November 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1695, l. 264.

or village councils, they were the sole actual agency of law enforcement and administration. The government gave militia much operational independence but expected them to follow its political agenda strictly and to risk their lives and endure economic privations out of sheer enthusiasm and hatred for class enemies. This expectation was unrealistic. The militia's hostility to the guerrillas did not mean that they accepted all official values. In fact, most fighters in the western areas placed self-interest above allegiance to the authorities. Even loyal militia were not obedient servants of the state. Men with guns who felt unrewarded and uncontrolled by state institutions tended to secure rewards by their own means. The Soviet administration turned a blind eye to unauthorized requisitions if they could be justified by military necessity, but fighters often acted outside these bounds. Some viewed service in the militia as private enterprise and preyed on their neighbors, thus provoking peasant resentment toward the authorities.

The destruction battalions protected people from guerrilla terror and gangs of criminals and deserters, but brutalized by a tense environment and emboldened by their apparent impunity and the example of their corrupt police superiors, militiamen often engaged in arbitrary violence. Fighters committed crimes because of greed or intoxication with alcohol or power or simply to settle old scores with personal enemies. A Ukrainian district party secretary wrote that in his region destruction battalions engaged "solely in plundering."[60] In June 1945, the Latvian NKVD reported that it had received numerous complaints from farmers about "illegal confiscations of property, … beating and murder of innocent people by militia." For instance,

> the fighters of a destruction battalion, Ivanenok, Onichenok and Stefanovich, being drunk, were riding a cart to the Pasensky District Executive Committee and met three women-strangers. Stefanovich maliciously fired his rifle and killed Elena Melekhova. … Militiaman Lazarev stole a bicycle from Kravchenko. The latter found this out and demanded that the bicycle be returned. Lazarev took Kravchenko to the forest and killed him by a shot in the back of the head.[61]

Baliasnikov, the state prosecutor of Lithuania, gave the following example as typical of the crimes committed by the militia:

> Fighters D. I. Januškauskas and T. F. Švadavičius, … being drunk, took submachine guns and entered the yard of Prane Bakanene in Vitsuny Village. They smashed the window, entered the house, took her son, Kazis Bakanas, outside and shot him though his left thigh from a submachine gun. Then they set the house on fire while the family was still inside, as well as barns in the yard. They were firing their submachine guns at the burning house giving the family no opportunity to escape.[62]

[60] Volodymyr Serhiichuk, *Sami sebe zvoiuvaly* (Kyiv: Ukrains'ka Vydavnycha Spilka, 2003), pp. 17, 18.

[61] E. Ronis, chair of Latvia Council of People's Commissars, to Kalnberziņš (9 June 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 4, ll. 106, 107.

[62] Baliasnikov to Suslov, "O narusheniiakh sotszakonnosti po Litovskoi SSR [Violations of socialist legality in Lithuania]" (19 November 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 18, l. 99.

Ethnicity played no role in this behavior: Militia perpetrated crimes against their own people. In the preceding examples, both militiamen and their victims belonged to the same ethnic groups.

The government finally provided some benefits to militia so as to prevent them from resigning or supplying themselves in ways that compromised authorities. Starting in the summer of 1945, the families of killed or wounded fighters were granted pensions in some western republics. They also received buildings and other property confiscated from "enemies of the people,"[63] which served the Communist goal of fueling social conflict. In 1946, militiamen who had to stay in the barracks were given uniforms, rations, and wages equal to those of private policemen. Fighters received privileges in taxation and were supplied with land. However, these measures were introduced slowly. In the summer of 1946 in Estonia, only 500 of 6,952 destruction battalion members were paid.[64] Those who felt unrewarded continued to prey on their neighbors until the authorities established a firmer control over the borderlands.

Conclusion

In the eastern Soviet regions, destruction battalions resembled the Special Task Force of the civil war; they consisted of dedicated and adequately trained fighters who operated under the firm control of security agencies and were a reliable tool of the regime. The quality of the militia in the western provinces was much lower; some units switched sides, others went out of control, and many were militarily inefficient. Nevertheless, destruction battalions were incomparably more important to Soviet security policy in the west than in the east, being not just an auxiliary to the police but also a vital means to transform counterinsurgency into a civil war. Without the militia, the government could not maintain its authority in the rural regions and enforce populist reforms intended to attract the peasantry because guerrilla terror crippled the rural administration. A dense network of militia garrisons across the countryside let the government break the vicious circle and institutionalize reforms, winning many supporters even in regions where anti-Soviet resistance was strongest, such as Galicia and Lithuania.

The government armed well over 100,000 farmers, whom it barely controlled, which repudiates the common assumption that pacification in the borderlands was conducted solely by ethnically alien outsiders. In fact, most fighters in destruction battalions were volunteers recruited from independent indigenous farmers. For the authorities, the combat capacity of the militia was secondary to its mere existence as a government agency rooted in the local population because its presence paved the way to the conflict perceived

[63] Lieutenant-Colonel Eismont, deputy head of BB Section of Lithuanian NKVD, to Leont'ev (15 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 319, l. 199.

[64] Andrusov, "Spravka o poteriakh lichnogo sostava istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Report on casualties of the destruction battalions]" (8 August 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 563, l. 111.

by the Soviet leaders as a class war. They viewed arming civilian supporters as a necessary element of their strategy. The nationalists realized this, admitting, "Nothing is more painful than to see our own dog infected with Bolshevik rabies. NKVD knows well what it can attain by urging one brother on another."[65] This is why Soviet leaders maintained militia even in western Ukraine, where they were least efficient. In April 1946, when the Ukrainian destruction battalions reached their nadir, Strokach, a police veteran and expert in irregular warfare, insisted that "the reduction of the militia's strength because of concern over possible treason is unacceptable. If a destruction battalion must be disbanded in a certain village, a new one must be immediately raised from reliable Soviet rural activists." He emphasized that "despite all the flaws in their organization and combat training, the destruction battalions still should be preserved because they involve the masses in the fight against banditry."[66]

The efficiency of the destruction battalions often was below that of the guerrillas, but they did not fight on equal terms. In August 1946, 34,000 MVD regular troops, as many as in the militia, conducted counterinsurgency in western Ukraine.[67] Since the destruction battalions cooperated with other security agencies, their combat capacity mattered less than their expertise in local affairs, which enabled them to perform some missions better than police or security troops. Their fighters, knowing the sentiments and activities of every person in their village, frustrated the guerrillas' aim to live between actions as ordinary farmers. They forced the Soviet enemies to surrender or to accept the dangerous life of a full-time insurgent, which few were willing to do after 1944. Most of western Ukraine is forestless, and guerrillas could hide from police in such regions only by vanishing among other villagers. The mere presence of destruction battalions wrecked the resistance on the steppe. Soviet leaders believed that the benefits gained from the destruction battalions considerably exceeded the harm inflicted by their abuses, occasional treason, and poor training. In 1953, they ordered the police to keep the militia "until the full liquidation of banditry."[68]

[65] Document No. 48 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 421.

[66] Strokach to all heads of MVD directorates of western provinces of Ukraine (28 April 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 40; Strokach to Kruglov, "Ob istrebitel'nykh batal'onakh [Destruction battalions]," (8 May 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 54.

[67] Colonel Saraev, head of UBB of Ukrainian MVD, to Leont'ev "Doklad o sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Actions of destruction battalions]" (27 September 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 82; Kruglov to Beria (August 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 35.

[68] Document No. 9 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy,* p. 301.

9

Police Tactics

Actions of NKVD Security Units, Intelligence Gathering, Covert Operations, and Intimidation

Razvedka nasha–ves' narod! [Our intelligence service is our entire nation!]
– Song about Nikolai Ezhov, head of the NKVD in 1936–1938

This study focuses on Soviet counterinsurgency strategy. However, it would be incomplete without a brief overview of the tactical tools the security agencies employed to suppress resistance. Counterinsurgents rejecting indiscriminate repressions face three major challenges: They have to spot permanently operating guerrilla bands, separate part-time rebels from civilians, and identify insurgent infrastructure. When these tasks are solved, the military superiority of regular forces makes the destruction of guerrillas easy. Intelligence is vital for the success of counterinsurgency. In rural regions with well-entrenched rebellion, police are usually overstretched and have insufficient manpower to maintain permanent surveillance over suspects. Instead, they receive intelligence from informers, undercover agents, and suspects whom they interrogate. In addition to intelligence acquisition, agents perform a variety of other missions: They assassinate rebel leaders, undermine the morale of rank and file, discredit guerrillas among their comrades and civilians, and help the police in eradicating treason within their structures. Meanwhile, the security forces raid guerrilla bases pinpointed by their agents, arrest members of the insurgent infrastructure identified by informers, and intimidate civilian sympathizers of the resistance into neutrality. The Soviet police employed all these methods with some sophistication, considerable flexibility, and extreme ruthlessness, seeking to focus the repressions on enemies of the regime while sparing apathetic, even unfriendly, "class allies" – the rural majority.

9.1 Tactics of the Regular Security Units

When guerrillas fought in large formations in 1944 and the first half of 1945, the NKVD security divisions carried the brunt of counterinsurgency. They

needed simple intelligence to spot these formations: Combing forests or even air reconnaissance brought enough information to corner them. After the guerrillas realized their mistake and dispersed their forces in platoons, operating as full-time units and small cells whose members lived as ordinary farmers, the counterinsurgents' "happy time" ended. The police had to gather far more precise information to eradicate fragmented resistance. Since western Ukraine was mostly forestless, UPA guerrillas built thousands of ingeniously designed bunkers inside and outside villages to store weapons, ammunition, and food and to hide in during police raids. In Lvov Province, the Soviets found hideouts in every fourth peasant house, and many remained undiscovered. One of the underground bunkers was so large that it could shelter 200 men; another was a tunnel 300 meters long with numerous rooms, entrances, and barricades that divided it into separate chambers. The entrance into a hideout could be under a bush, stump, haystack, doghouse, or church altar or through a well, tree hollow, stove, grave, or toilet pit. The police were stunned when a thirsty soldier attempted to pull a bucket from a well only to discover that the surface of the water elevated as he rotated the crank; it turned out that he had pulled up a round tank filled with water, under which he discovered a hideout.[1] Guerrillas in the Baltic region also dug many bunkers in forests or homesteads. It was hard to find them and even harder to identify part-time guerrillas living among civilians or to root out guerrilla infrastructure.

Already in November 1944, the Ukrainian Communist party suggested that security forces had to change tactics:

> The combing of forests and settlements worked before but not any longer. Bandits have adapted to it and escape in time. … NKVD troops should disperse in small garrisons between 10 and 15 men. This would allow us to place garrisons in all villages infected with banditry and to cut them [guerrillas] off from the villages. Armed local activists will consolidate around these garrisons. In this way we will double or triple the manpower [available] against banditry. … We must have agents in every village. Agents operating in areas most infected with banditry … should be equipped with radios.[2]

The NKVD adjusted to the new conditions by changing the tactics of the regular security units, raising militia from local farmers, organizing agent networks, and launching scores of covert operations. At first, before the police could recruit enough informers, they had to learn how to fight resistance with minimal intelligence data. Keeping in mind the counterinsurgency maxim,

[1] Jeffrey Burds, "*Agentura*: Soviet Informers' Network in Galicia, 1944–1948," *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 11(1):94, 1997; Apollonov, deputy people's commissar of internal affairs (6 December 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 208; Peter Potichnyj, ed., *Arkhitektura rezistansu: kryivky i bunkry UPA v radians'kykh dokumentakh,* Vol. 38 (Toronto, Canada: Litopys UPA, 2002).

[2] "Politicheskaia informatsiia o sostoianii Volynskoi oblasti [Political information on the situation in Volyn' Province]" (15 November 1944), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 189, ll. 30, 31. Police documents contain no information confirming that agents ever used radio. Apparently, this aspect of the plan was not fulfilled.

"The higher the level of control, the less likely are individuals to defect … and the more likely they are to denounce,"[3] the NKVD dispersed its divisions in platoon- or section-sized garrisons stationed in villages supporting the resistance and strengthened each of them with local militia. In Ukraine, the police established 623 such garrisons in August 1945; in Lithuania in the following year, it organized 242 garrisons.[4] They engaged mainly in setting ambushes around the villages where they stayed. Aggressive patrols by security companies or platoons supplemented the garrison network. These units, equipped only with light weapons, walked across the rough terrain where guerrillas operated and performed search-and-destroy missions targeting full-time guerrilla bands. They maintained radio contact with motorized NKVD companies that rushed to the region where guerrillas were spotted and blocked their retreat. Other units sealed villages known for their support of the resistance and stayed there for a week, moving methodically from house to house and searching every square foot with sniffing dogs. If they found an empty hideout outside the village, they booby-trapped it.[5] These new methods improved the performance of the regular security forces. They effectively cut guerrillas off from garrisoned villages, while raiding companies destroyed the largest guerrilla bands. The NKVD compiled a search manual with pictures and descriptions of typical bunkers discovered by the police and distributed it among soldiers. In 1945–1946, they uncovered 28,969 hideouts in western Ukraine.[6] The security agencies continued to employ these tactics with some adjustments until the end of the resistance. OUN acknowledged the initiative, ingenuity, and tenacity of soldiers in the search for guerrillas and complained that the new police tactics "paralyzed" their actions.[7] However, these tactics were effective mainly against full-time guerrillas. Regular NKVD units could not destroy resistance infrastructure or small cells whose members lived as farmers but engaged in terrorism against the district police, Soviet activists, and sympathizers. As police commanders observed, with progressive dispersal of the resistance, "all types of military operations that have proved their efficiency in 1944–1945" became "as a rule futile if conducted without thorough

[3] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 13.

[4] Kruglov to Stalin (24 October 1946), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 139, l. 280; General Fadeev, commander of security troops in Ukraine, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh operativno-boevoi deiatel'nosti [Report of actions]" (26 January 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 144, l. 46.

[5] Colonel Beliavskii (1 October 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, ll. 161–166; Lieutenant-Colonel Moisei Sladkevich, deputy commander of security troops, "O provedenii operatsii po bor'be s banditizmom [Operations against banditry]" (12 February 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 12v.

[6] Burds, "*Agentura*," p. 95.

[7] OUN, "Otchet o metodakh i deistviiakh bol'shevikov [Report on methods and actions of the Bolsheviks]" (24 June 1947), PC, reel 172, l. 324; Document No. 37 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), p. 193.

preliminary investigation."[8] Khrushchev believed that an agent network had to play a decisive role in the struggle against insurgency. He wrote: "We are blind without agents."[9]

9.2 Informer Network and Undercover Agents

During the first occupation of the western borderlands, the authorities had no time to establish as efficient an informer network as they had created in the old territories. However, they still recruited many informers who, during the German occupation, cooperated with the partisans and gathered information regarding the activities of nationalists and German collaborators. In addition, the partisans made a persistent effort to convert nationalist guerrillas. By September 1943, partisans of Rovno Province already had 20 agents within OUN, including three lower-ranking leaders.[10] When the Soviets reoccupied the borderlands, these informers and agents passed information they had accumulated to the police, who quickly rounded up the identified resistance members.[11] During the next several years, the Soviets established an enormous agent network numbering tens of thousands of men and women who became the primary source of intelligence about insurgency.

This network had a three-level hierarchy. Informers, the most numerous element at the lowest level, relayed passive knowledge acquired sometimes even without contacting the subjects of surveillance but simply by being observant. Most of these informers were peasants. Agents who actively hunted for information and performed other independent missions were at a higher level. Internal agents (*vnutrenniki*), usually converted resistance members, operated within guerrilla bands or their infrastructure, whereas raiding agents (*marshrutniki*), recruited among those whose job duties required travel – such as railway workers, wood cutters, postmen, peddlers, and cattle traders – collected information across a certain region. Finally, the chief agents (*residenty*) did not gather intelligence themselves but supervised the operation of an informer network covering up to 10 villages.[12]

Why did people become informers? As elsewhere, their motivations reflected "genuine political preferences, expectations of personal gain, private grudges, coercion and blackmail, or survival considerations."[13] Some

[8] Colonel Fateev, commander of the 81st Rifle Security Division, "Doklad ob operativno-boevoi i sluzhebnoi deiatel'nosti [Report of actions]" (20 March 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 145, l. 89.

[9] Document No. 73 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996), p. 168.

[10] Begma, "Spravka o sostoianii garnizonov vraga [Information on enemy garrisons]" (September 1943), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 585, l. 40.

[11] Document No. 2 in Jeffrey Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura* (Moscow: Sovremennaia Istoriia, 2006), p. 209.

[12] Document No. 2 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* pp. 215, 217.

[13] Kalyvas, *Logic of Violence,* p. 105.

volunteered for the job; these were mostly those who viewed guerrillas as their mortal enemies: party and Komsomol members, various specialists sent from the eastern regions, local activists, militia, peasants striving to avenge relatives killed by insurgents, and in western Ukraine, ethnic minorities. These people understood that they were in danger as long as resistance existed, and they willingly collaborated with the police. Others worked for pay. A police manual stated that every informer who had brought valuable information leading to the liquidation of guerrillas had to be rewarded with money. Many agents received flat wages in addition to lump payments. A dangerous job presumed generous rewards. In Lithuania, the average wage was 6,000 rubles for six months of work, but some agents got up to 21,000 rubles. By comparison, the heads of the republican Communist parties received 12,000 rubles, republican ministers received between 9,600 and 11,400 rubles, and first secretaries of provincial party committees received 7,800 rubles over the same period.[14] In addition to monetary rewards, the police granted its agents exclusion from military conscription,[15] an important motivation as long as the war continued. The police also recruited teenagers by promising them attractive careers and offered assistance in the enlistment into pilot or military cadet schools in return for spying.[16] Many others were pressed to become informers. The police instructions stated that "under no circumstances should coercion or compromising evidence be used" during recruitment,[17] and occasionally, party functionaries reprimanded overzealous policemen for such methods. However, since failure to recruit enough agents could cause more serious trouble, the police routinely forced people to become informers. While *bedniaks* and *seredniaks* uninvolved in resistance usually could decline the job offer without serious repercussions, former guerrillas, guerrilla families, wealthier peasants, former officers of the national army, the urban middle class, and priests were pressed into cooperation by the threat of deportation as "bandit accomplices" or "class enemies." The only option open to members of these groups unwilling to cooperate was to concede and then give the police no tips, claiming that they were unaware of subversive activities. If subsequent harassment bore no fruit, police would either give up or add the useless informers to the deportation list. If, however, a person cooperated, the police could block the decision of local party agencies to

[14] Lieutenant-Colonel Il'inskii, "Rabota s bazoi sodeistviia [Work with the basis of support]" (17 September 1950), PC, reel 434, l. 158; George Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred: Lithuanian Nationalism during the Triple Occupation, 1939–1953," Ph.D. dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston, 2003, p. 204; V. Vasil'ev et al., eds, *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 153; Document No. 1.20 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m,* Vol. 1 (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), pp. 168, 169.

[15] Document No. 2 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* p. 224; Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), p. 299.

[16] Document No. 2 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* p. 214.

[17] Il'inskii, "Rabota s bazoi sodeistviia," l. 156.

TABLE 9.1 *Growth of the Agent Network in Lithuania in 1945*

	January	February	March
Chief agents (*rezidenty*)	10	11	14
Undercover agents	274	315	364
Informers	2,228	3,132	3,442

Source: Lieutenant-Colonel Karlin, head of 2nd GUBB section, "Spravka o khode likvidatsii antisovetskogo podpol'ia [Report on the liquidation of anti-Soviet underground]" (April 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 445, ll. 1–66.

deport this particular "class enemy" by suggesting to upper-level party superiors that the valuable agent had to be spared.

The police put an enormous effort into expanding the informer network. Most agents were unreliable, and their turnover was great. Every month guerrillas killed some of them, and the police dismissed those who were useless and arrested double agents. Yet the authorities fervently expanded the informer network in every borderland region (Table 9.1). By 1 June 1945, the NKVD in western Ukraine had 175 residents, 1,196 agents, and 19,843 informers.[18] In other regions, the informer network was less numerous but growing with every month; the Lithuanian police had 27,700 informers by 1951.[19]

The NKVD had acquired a wealth of experience in working with informers during the Great Terror, and it applied this experience to the borderlands. A police district station usually needed only about a month to organize a basic informer network in the district it monitored[20]; it then relentlessly expanded and refined this network. The increasing quantity of agents began transforming into quality of intelligence data. The informers were particularly efficient in cities where communication between informers and police was easy, and the latter could instantly react to tips. In May 1945, Lithuanian agents reported the emergence of a new, predominantly urban resistance group, the Lithuanian Partisan Union. It had existed for just two months when the police arrested its key leaders in Vilnius, including Matas Mastauskas, deputy commander-in-chief; Zigmas Petrauskas, chief of its central headquarters; Juozas Petrauskas, a member of its central headquarters; Juozas Čekaitis, chief of the administrative section; and 32 other leaders who had gathered for a meeting. Information received from their interrogation allowed the police to kill and arrest 2,000 Lithuanian Partisan Union members within three months, virtually destroying this network by September 1945.[21]

[18] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 305.

[19] Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), p. 255.

[20] Document No. 2 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* p. 209.

[21] L. Tkachenko to Beria (1 November 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 100, ll. 262–269; Leont'ev to Kruglov (7 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 354, ll. 38, 39; Beria to Stalin (27 June 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 97, l. 82; Suslov, "Otchet o rabote buro TsK VKP(b) po Litve [Report of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania]" (July 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, l. 20.

While the informer network targeted both guerrilla infrastructure and guerrillas who lived among civilians, the NKVD also made a great effort to infiltrate permanently operating bands. Police officers who accompanied security troops during counterinsurgency operations selected captured guerrillas willing to cooperate in return for amnesty and the safety of their families, took from them a written consent, and sent them back to the remnants of their units before their dispersed comrades could notice their absence. Sometimes the police faked the escapes of a dozen or more arrested insurgents, half of whom were recruited agents, and when the guerrilla counterintelligence agencies interrogated the escapees, the testimonies of the other half made the stories of agents plausible. In other cases, the police might indicate they had been bribed in order to allow them to release a recruited guerrilla without revealing his status as an informant. Or they might raid his house, burn it down, and fake the deportation of his family, the usual punishment for those implicated in resistance, but in such cases they would simply move the family to another house in an adjacent province.[22] Police communicated with such agents through their civilian relatives. The police and converts never fully trusted each other. The NKVD instructions stated: "All agents engaged in revealing the bandit underground must be checked periodically through reliable agents and other covert actions."[23] If the police heard nothing from an enlisted agent, they leaked information about his recruitment to suspected guerrilla sympathizers, and the insurgent security service killed the alleged traitor.

Agents planted in a guerrilla unit had four missions. First, they had to identify the unit's command structure, supply depots, civilian infrastructure, and liaisons. Second, they had to inform the police about planned guerrilla actions, detail the precise location of insurgents, and "expose them to attack" (*podvesti pod udar*). Third, they had to "create among bandits feelings of hopelessness, insecurity, and mistrust of their leaders" and thus prompt their surrender or provoke armed clashes among guerrilla bands.[24] Finally, agents had to assassinate guerrilla commanders if the opportunity emerged. There are dozens of reports on each of these types of missions in police files. On 10 August 1944, the Mezherichskii police detained UPA liaison officer Ivan Nakonechnyi and released him "after a proper conversation." On 19 August, he returned with 138 UPA fighters willing to surrender.[25] In early

[22] Document No. 2 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* pp. 223, 233.

[23] Document No. 10 in Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody (1944–1956)* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), p. 309.

[24] General Apollonov (6 December 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 206; Kruglov to Beria, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh bor'by s ounovskim banditizmom [Outcome of the struggle against OUN banditry]" (8 September 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 131, l. 416v; Ivan Bilas, *Repesyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini 1917–1953,* Vol. 1 (Kyiv: Lybid', 1994), p. 260.

[25] Kruglov to Beriia, "Soobshcheniie o khode bor'by s ounovskim banditizmom [Report on the fight against OUN banditry]" (25 August 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 131, l. 411. See other similar cases in TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1702, ll. 63, 115; d. 1722, l. 115.

1945, Davydovych, a converted OUN regional inspector of military training who knew the UPA's system of codes and passwords, helped the police carry out several operations in which they liquidated 300 guerrillas and captured 10 large stores of weapons and food.[26] On 5 April 1945, a police unit acting on an informer tip killed Makar Mel'nyk, deputy commander of UPA-North.[27] Police infiltrators killed Vasyl' Andrusiak, commander of the UPA group "Chornyi lis,"[28] Jonas Petrulis, commander of a 40-man-strong guerrilla unit in the Lithuanian Panevežys Province,[29] and dozens of other guerrilla commanders.

The police never penetrated OUN's central *provod* but succeeded in planting agents into its provincial headquarters. The police in Volyn' Province reported in 1945: "The quality of the agent network is improving, as becomes clear from the fact that in August agents exposed all operating bands to attack."[30] In the early 1950s, four of the 46 senior Lithuanian resistance commanders were MGB agents. The greatest police success in the Baltic region was the recruitment of Juozas Markulis, a doctor, in the spring of 1945. Four years later, Markulis became a top leader of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement, the overarching agency coordinating Lithuanian resistance.[31] Police controlled this committee through Markulis, frustrating attempts to develop a coherent strategy and periodically decapitating Lithuanian resistance with his help.

Khrushchev was the only leader of a western republic who closely supervised police tactics and made a notable contribution to their development. He made provincial party secretaries personally responsible for expansion of the agent network and issued instructions explaining how to enhance the efficiency of covert operations. A serious problem that the police had to solve was communication with informers. There were no telephones in peasant houses. Informers could not come to the police station, nor could an officer visit informers because every policeman was under permanent surveillance by the resistance. After Khrushchev heard about this problem, he suggested how to kill several birds with one stone:

[26] Grushetskii to Khrushchev, "Otchet o vypolnenii postanovleniia TsK KP(b)U [Report on the implementation of the directive of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (27 March 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, ll. 151v–152.

[27] General Gorshkov, "Spravka o rezul'tatakh bor'by s banditizmom [Outcomes of the struggle against banditry]" (April 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 310, l. 6.

[28] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 290.

[29] Tkachenko to Leont'ev (21 September 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 277.

[30] "O nekotorykh itogakh vypolneniia reshenii TsK KP(b)U [Measures taken in accordance with the decisions of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (April 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1702, l. 27; Captain Dobrinskii, head of UBB sector in Ukraine, "Spravka o vypolnenii resheniia Politbiuro TsK KP(b)U [Implementation of the decision of the Ukrainian Politburo]" (14 September 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2410, l. 178.

[31] Nijole Gaškaite-Zemaitiene, "The Partisan War in Lithuania from 1944 to 1953," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 1999), p. 43; Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred," pp. 185–191; Liudas Truska, "*Voina posle voiny,*" *Rodina* 7:131, 1997.

In order to protect our informers and confuse bandits so that they could not identify the persons connected with NKVD and NKGB, we ordered the heads of NKVD and NKGB provincial offices to summon many local residents, … mainly *kulaks,* merchants and other hostile elements, for interviews. … This will protect our informers, because the confused bandits will commit terrorist acts against the hostile elements. … In addition, the local population terrorized by bandits will be forced to actively resist them.[32]

The Ukrainian police often practiced this method of informer protection, simultaneously provoking the extermination of alleged resistance supporters by guerrillas and sowing mistrust between insurgents and civilians. The best testimony about the effectiveness of the police informers came from the insurgents. An OUN functionary observed:

The informer network works meticulously. It is impossible to move across the area without being spotted. Lodging in the village is out of the question. Informers are trained as well as circus dogs. They attentively study every resistance member passing by. … No hideout unknown to MVD-MGB exists in the village. The liaison between the informer network and MVD-MGB officers is excellent. … They [the police] receive comprehensive information about the daily events in the village. … The number of informers among us is growing.[33]

A few days before Mykola Arsenych, head of SB, was spotted by an agent and killed by police in January 1947, he wrote to Shukhevych: "The enemy presses us most severely with their secret army, the agent network. Here we have our greatest reversals." He believed that the police had at least five informers in every village.[34] "Basha," a UPA commander, became desperate in 1948: "Had I attempted to cleanse the [MGB] undercover agents from Bukovina, only trees and stones would have remained."[35] "Stal," an OUN leader in the same region, reported: "If we analyze the causes for all our casualties during this year [1948], we would see that they were all inflicted by [MGB] agents."[36] Beginning in the summer of 1945, the agent network became the primary counterinsurgency tool, more important than the routine search-and-destroy raids of the regular security forces.

9.3 Covert Operations

In addition to the informer network, police employed various compromising schemes. If the police wanted to check out the loyalty of a peasant, they faked

[32] Khrushchev to Stalin (20 January 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1848, ll. 401, 402.

[33] "Druzhe provodnik! [Comrade chief!]" (March 1947), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 2, d. 121, ll.108, 109.

[34] "Mykhailo" to Shukhevych (January 1947), PC, reel 172, l. 85; Jeffrey Burds, "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944–1948," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 42(2–4):281, 2001.

[35] Document No. 53 in P. Sokhan', et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 6, p. 317.

[36] Ibid., pp. 316, 317.

the escape of a converted guerrilla, ordering him to hide on the property of the suspect, and waited for the latter to report the guerrilla to the authorities. If the police strongly suspected a peasant of helping insurgents but could not collect enough evidence for an arrest, they eliminated him without violating the law by inciting guerrillas to kill him. A police officer would make several visits to the suspect's house in broad daylight, talking each time for a while about trivial matters, or he could praise the suspect at public meetings for information about the resistance allegedly provided to the NKVD. This was enough to seal a death warrant for the framed person. If the police identified a guerrilla commander but could neither persuade him to surrender nor capture him, they wrote him a letter with instructions as to a collaborator, and then an agent planted in the guerrilla band made sure that his comrades intercepted the letter. Or the police would visit a house of suspected resistance sympathizers and "forget" a list of "informers" that in fact contained names of rebels they sought to eliminate. The consequences were predictable: Guerrillas killed the compromised persons, their relatives, and often a dozen of their friends who loyally served the resistance.[37] When the police in a West Ukrainian district learned that a UPA platoon called "Zhura" operated in the area, they spread information among villagers that this section considered defection; other guerrillas promptly destroyed this platoon.[38] In another incident, "Nikita," the leader of a SB section, contacted a former guerrilla, Il'a Boiun, who had surrendered to the police and was then appointed to command a militia platoon in Borovoe Village. "Nikita" ordered Boiun to prepare an operation aimed to disarm his subordinates. Instead, Boiun reported this to the police, who dictated a letter to him reprimanding "Nikita" for the failure to kill "Chereshnia," the commander of the guerrilla unit in which "Nikita" served. This letter was "erroneously" delivered to "Chereshnia", who strangled "Nikita." Three other members of "Nikita's" section deserted because they feared that they would suffer the same fate.[39] In a similar way, the police liquidated "Okun," an OUN regional leader in Ternopol Province; "Zozulia," an OUN district leader; "Vorobei" and "Masepa," subdistrict SB commandants; Pokalniškis, a unit commander in Lithuania; and many others.[40]

[37] Document No. 9 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), p. 418; Grushetskii to Khrushchev (8 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 342; Profatilov to Khrushchev, "Otchet Volynskogo obkoma TsK KP(b)U [Report of the Volynian Provincial Party Committee]" (25 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, ll. 151v–152.

[38] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 303.

[39] Colonel Saraev, head of UBB of Ukraine, to Leont'ev, "Doklad o sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Actions of destruction battalions]" (21 October 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 119.

[40] Kompanets, secretary of Ternopol Provincial Party Committee, to Khrushchev, "O khode bor'by s bandami ukrainsko-nemetskikh natsionalistov [On the struggle against Ukrainian-German nationalists]" (29 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1702, l. 178; Sobko, secretary of Brody District Party Committee (20 June 1947), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 2, d. 121, l. 118; Begma, "Otchet o vypolnenii postanovleniia TsK KP(b)U [Report on the implementation

Khrushchev proposed how to lure guerrillas into a trap by using bait (*primanki*):

1. Functionaries from district centers should visit the villages where bandits operate and spend a night there … ;
2. Various goods especially attractive to the bandits (clothes, boots, etc.) should be delivered to village stores as bait;
3. Trucks with food and other cargo should fake breakdowns. … Information about the nature of the cargo should be leaked to the residents, who should also find out that the truck is unguarded and has stopped for the night because of a breakdown. Bandits will hear about it through their agents and attempt to attack it.
4. In all these cases … bait should be protected by ambushes skillfully set by security troops.[41]

The police also used as bait bodies of killed guerrillas, arms left unguarded, families rounded up for deportation, lonely soldiers, and election polling stations. These tactics were often effective. When Boiko, party secretary of Peremyshl' District, agreed to serve as bait, the police ambushed and killed 29 guerrillas who came after him. In Stanislav Province alone, the police organized 160 "baits" in 1945 and reported that 143 of them brought results.[42]

Covert operations conducted by NKVD commandos were another aspect of police tactics. The Soviet counterinsurgents had acquired some expertise in this type of action during the civil war and in the interwar period, but in the borderlands, they launched covert operations far more frequently. The police used two types of commando units (*spetsgruppy*) in the borderlands. The first type was company-strong groups consisting of crack security troops and Red partisans impersonating Russian auxiliary police on German service. Several German Communists disguised as their commanders were attached to them. These companies were to contact the resistance, collect intelligence, offer guerrillas to unify forces against the Communists, and then eliminate them in a sudden strike. These groups originated in western Ukraine. One of them, led by agent "Orel," operated in Rovno Province from May 1944 to April 1945. During this period, group members killed 526 and captured 140

of the directive of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1698, l. 8; Kruglov to Stalin (26 June 1946), GARF, f. 9401, op. 1, l. 138; Document No. 137 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 4, p. 452.

[41] V. Druzhinin, secretary of the Ternopol Provincial Party Committee, "O dopolnitel'nykh merakh bor'by s ukrainsko-nemetskimi natsionalistami [Additional measures against Ukrainian-German nationalists]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1702, l. 160.

[42] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei raikomov partii [Meeting of the secretaries of the District Party Committees]" (24 November 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 202, l. 73; Document No. 7 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 410. The success rate of such tactics might have been inflated to please Khrushchev because in the following years when he turned to other matters, the police rarely used them.

guerrillas.[43] In December 1944, GUBB organized five such units in Belorussia. Three of them were commanded by police officers who had been awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union title, which shows that the NKVD regarded their mission as extremely important.[44] After these units performed successfully against AK in Belorussia, four of them moved to Lithuania in June 1945 and soon destroyed several guerrilla bands there. One commando unit operated in Latvia in the summer and the fall of 1946; it captured the guerrilla leader "Black Peter" and a number of other insurgents.[45] However, these commandos were alien to the local environment, and nationalists mistrusted people from the old territories, even anti-Communists. The commandos performed well against larger permanently operating bands, but they became ineffective after guerrillas dispersed their forces.

As soon as the Red Army had overrun western Ukraine, the police arrived at the idea of organizing a second type of commando unit, this one raised from converted guerrillas, usually lower- and medium-ranking leaders who could not receive pardon automatically like the rank-and-file fighters but had to earn it by contributing to counterinsurgency operations. This type of unit apparently was the brainchild of Major A. Sokolov, head of OBB in Ternopol Province, who wrote a training manual for them. He explained his logic:

> It's best to organize these groups from bandits who have either been captured, legalized, or who have turned themselves in. We do not need to train such people how to be bandits. On the one hand, it has proven impossible to teach the "peoples' defenders" [Red partisans and militia] how to carry on like [nationalist] partisans. They did not know the bandit jargon, did not know how to properly wear the bandit emblems, and were always stealing. The true bandits noticed all this and naturally suspected them of being soldiers. Thus we must use former bandits for these groups.[46]

Such units emerged in the early summer of 1944 and continued to operate until the end of the insurgency. In order to test his idea, Sokolov himself led one of them, disguised as an SB group, and showed "exceptional courage, boldness, and heroism," for which he was nominated for the Hero of the Soviet Union title.[47] His unit, consisting of 19 converted guerrillas, killed the commander of UPA-South, "Gordienko," and the commander of UPA-North, "Dovbnia"; captured a courier of the central *provod,* "Natalka"; persuaded 74 guerrillas to surrender; and delivered intelligence that allowed the police to kill and capture about 150 insurgents.[48]

[43] Bilas, *Represyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini,* Vol. 1, p. 173.

[44] Beria to Stalin (20 December 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 68, l. 222; Bogdan Kobulov, deputy people's commissar of state security, to Beria, "Dokladnaia zapiska o khode bor'by s banditizmom [Report on the struggle against banditry]" (June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 17; Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), pp. 198, 199.

[45] Tkachenko to Leont'ev (17 July 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 84.

[46] Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred," p. 179.

[47] Bilas, *Represyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini,* Vol. 1, p. 173.

[48] Document No. 4 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* pp. 272–284.

Sokolov's report reveals stunning details about police recruitment methods. When four guerrillas cornered in a village attempted to break through a police cordon, two were killed, one was gravely wounded, and the last man, Dmytro Dydik, shot all his ammunition at the police, wounding two soldiers. Dydik then attempted to blow himself up with a hand grenade that failed to ignite. Taken prisoner, he told the police he would give them no information, even if they killed him. In response, Sokolov released him from custody and sent him home, but ordered several converted guerrillas whom Dydik knew to visit him and persuade him to join them. Dydik was so shocked by his ordeal and the betrayal of his comrades that he broke down. The next day, he guided a police platoon into his village, and they captured 33 of the 34 insurgents who lived there. On the same day, Sokolov appointed Dydik, a person who a day earlier had wounded two Soviet soldiers and attempted to commit suicide, a section commander in his unit; afterward, he was pleased with Dydik's service.[49] This case shows that some Soviet counterinsurgents were skillful and pragmatic psychologists willing to take risks and forfeit revenge if they could enlist valuable recruits.

Commandos drafted from security troops acted independently. Units made of converted guerrillas were smaller; usually they were section strong, but their number was far greater. They could not destroy large guerrilla bands on their own, but they operated in close cooperation with regular security troops, who acted on intelligence delivered by the commandos. As a police officer explained, "The population, intimidated by bandit terror and sometimes supporting OUN, is extremely reluctant to give information about bandits." However, commandos impersonating guerrillas easily "enter into contact with the local population [and] receive information from it."[50] Another task of the commandos was assassination of guerrilla leaders. Some such units were led by undercover police officers or Red partisans, but many consisted only of converted insurgents. The police sought to include members of OUN-M in OUN-B-dominated commando units so that the two rival factions could report on each other.[51] After the police found former guerrillas "highly efficient" against fragmented rebellion, the Ukrainian provincial party committees ordered that three or four section-strong commando units per district be organized from amnestied guerrillas and militia fighters.[52] Between January and March 1945, 162 such units with a total strength of 1,825 men operated in Volyn', Lvov, and Rovno provinces, just three of the seven western Ukrainian provinces.[53] In early 1946, Sokolov was transferred from western Ukraine to Lithuania to

[49] Document No. 4 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* pp. 273, 274.

[50] Colonel Beliavskii (1 October 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 166.

[51] Document No. 4 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* p. 274.

[52] "Otchet o bor'be s ukrainsko-nemetskimi natsionalistami [Report on the struggle against Ukrainian-German nationalists]" (1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 213, l. 23; Profatilov, "Ocherednye zadachi raboty v selakh [Tasks in the villages]" (early 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1693, l. 42.

[53] Profatilov to Khrushchev, "Otchet obkoma KP(b)U [Report of the Provincial Party Committee]" (20 January 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1693, l. 34; Grushetskii to

organize commando groups there, too. Later they began operating in Latvia and Estonia, although the scale of their actions in those republics was smaller than in Ukraine and Lithuania.

The police files give many examples of the spectacular operations conducted by commandos. By February 1945, 46 commando units operating in Stanislav Province killed 21 OUN leaders; took 233 prisoners, including a member of OUN central *provod*; and captured a regional UPA archive with 40 kilograms of documents. In early 1945, a group with 20 members led by "Iurchenko," a former commander of a guerrilla battalion, the largest UPA unit, delivered a devastating blow to resistance in Lvov Province. On the basis of the intelligence they collected, police killed or captured 611 guerrillas. In March 1945, an agent in Volyn' Province identified a homestead in which several senior OUN leaders stayed. A commando group led by "Maksim-Voron," a converted UPA battalion commander, raided the homestead and killed six guerrillas, among them Mykhailo Medvid' ("Karpovych"), member of the UPA supreme command, and "Makarenko," inspector of UPA military training.[54] In January 1946, Ukrainian commandos captured Fedir Vorobets' ("Vereshchaka"), head of the OUN-East region, and in April 1949, they killed Commander of UPA-West Vasyl' Sydor ("Shelest"). In 1949–1952, they killed and captured three members of the OUN central *provod*: Oleksa Hasin, chief of the UPA general staff; Vasyl' Okhrimovych, head of the OUN Carpathian region; and Vasyl' Halasa, head of the OUN-Northwest region; they also eliminated many leaders of smaller calibre.[55] Only 64 commandos operated in Latvia; they killed 167 and captured 58 guerrillas.[56] In April 1946, they killed Peteris Supe, head of the Latvian National Partisan Union, as well as the commander of the guerrilla "regiment" *Terauds*.[57] In the early 1950s, the Estonian

Khrushchev, "Ob'iasnitel'naia zapiska [Report]" (28 March 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 148v; Begma to Khrushchev, "Otchetnyi doklad po bor'be s bandami [Report on the struggle against bandits] (20 February 1945), PC, box 74, l. 21.

[54] Document No. 87 in N. I . Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), p. 264; Grushetskii to Khrushchev, "Otchet o vypolnenii postanovleniia TsK KP(b)U," ll. 151v–152; Slon' to Khrushchev, "Otchet o khode bor'by s ukrainsko-nemetskimi natsionalistami [Report on the struggle against Ukrainian-German nationalists]" (28 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1697, l. 73; Profatilov to Khrushchev, "Otchet Volynskogo obkoma KP(b)U o likvidatsii ostatkov band ukrainsko-nemetskikh natsionalistov [Report of the Volynian Provincial Party Committee on the liquidation of the remnants of the Ukrainian-German nationalists]" (18 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1693, l. 118.

[55] Documents No. 30 and 108 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7, pp. 202, 203, 505; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 344.

[56] Aldris Bergmanis, Ritvars Jansons, and Indulis Zalite, "The Activities and the Main Repressive Task of Latvian SSR Agencies of National Security 1944–1956," in Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940–1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), pp. 275–276.

[57] "Svodka o khode bor'by s banditizmom [Report on the struggle against banditry]" (15 January 1946), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2944, l. 88; Lieutenant-Colonel Poliakov,

police supplied converted agents with the incapacitating "Neptune" drug. The agents dissolved the drug in beer they offered to guerrillas and called the police when they were unconscious.[58]

An important mission of the commandos was uncovering of guerrilla supply depots and their infrastructure. Lithuanian police agents staged skirmishes with security units in villages known to support resistance and faked a hasty retreat, asking peasants to hide them or connect them to local rebels. Later the police arrested the identified resistance cells and civilian sympathizers.[59] The NKVD also used informers and commandos to weed out treason in its own ranks. When they found out that OUN had infiltrated destruction battalions, the police recruited two or three agents in every unit and then launched a massive purge of the militia on the basis of intelligence delivered by the informers.[60] When agent "Lisa" reported that the militia in Trushevichi Village planned to defect, all its fighters were arrested and confessed their treason.[61] In April 1946, agents planted in a guerrilla band in Stanislav Province reported probable treason among the district police. In order to investigate the allegation, an outsider security unit took the suspected policeman, Ivanov, as a guide to a remote village. Commandos disguised as UPA fighters "attacked" them, and the policemen "surrendered." Ivanov stated that he was an OUN member, gave the "guerrillas" his OUN alias, named four other OUN members among the local police, and suggested that all "prisoners" be shot, after which he and the other traitors were arrested.[62]

Another common type of covert operation was the "abduction" of guerrilla prisoners who refused to cooperate with the police. The commandos impersonating SB brought the "liberated" prisoners to a "rebel camp" in the forest and interrogated them in a friendly manner or using torture if necessary. Usually guerrillas whom the police could not break revealed everything they knew to their "comrades." A typical example of such an operation was the one conducted in December 1944, after the police captured Artemiziia Galitskaia, OUN head in Bukovina. She attempted to commit suicide during the police raid, wounded herself in the head, and was taken to a hospital. After she refused to give any information, three agents disguised as UPA guerrillas "abducted" her from the hospital and then interrogated her allegedly to investigate the treason that led to the arrest of the regional leadership. Galitskaia named about 600

acting head of GUBB, to the Minister of MVD S. Kruglov (24 January 1947), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 709, l. 35.

[58] Document No. 4 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy,* pp. 251, 263, 276.

[59] Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred," pp. 180, 181.

[60] Asmolov, deputy head of the BB Directorate of the Ukrainian MVD, "Spravka po resheniiu Orgbiuro TsK KP(b)U [Note about a decision of the Organizational Bureau of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party]" (12 August 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 22.

[61] Strokach to Krugov, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh proverki i chistki istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Report on inspection and purge of destruction battalions]" (18 June 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 561, l. 168.

[62] Strokach to Shuiskii (30 January 1946), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2579, ll. 3, 4.

OUN members, 99 of whom were promptly arrested and 123 killed.[63] In this way, insurgency in Bukovina was virtually destroyed. Another similar, but multistage operation was launched a year later in Drogobych Province. The police arrested the wife of OUN member "Boitur." Her interrogator hinted that he would release her for a bribe of 15,000 rubles. She wrote a letter to her husband about it. As soon as "Boitur" received the letter, a commando group impersonating SB arrested him and accused him of treason using the letter as evidence of his cooperation with the police. They requested that he identify OUN members who would confirm his loyalty. On the basis of the information received, the police uncovered 12 hideouts, destroyed an SB unit, and killed two medium-level OUN functionaries. In addition, they captured the district head of the OUN medical service, "Nadiia." She swallowed poison, but the police revived her. After she refused to give any information, she was allegedly transported to another town. When the police truck drove through a forest, a commando unit disguised as SB attacked it, "shot" the guards, and abducted her. The "SB officers" stated that the police had killed their comrades because Nadiia had betrayed them. In response, Nadiia identified 20 other OUN members who would vouch for her, including several men serving in the Soviet police and Mariia Kulish, an OUN liaison person. The commandos asked Kulish to connect them to a local resistance cell. She took them to Stes' Herasym, another liaison person, but on their way to Herasym, the commandos were "attacked" by police who charged Kulish with serving as a guide for an "SB unit," and she confessed. Meanwhile, the "escaped SB members" interrogated Herasym about the possible causes for Kulish's capture. He identified 16 members of the civilian infrastructure, one of whom brought them to a local OUN leader. The commandos repeated the trick, and the leader identified more than 20 persons involved in resistance. In total, during this operation, the police arrested 92 members of the resistance and uncovered 20 hideouts with supplies.[64] Soviet archives mention dozens of similar operations all over the borderlands.

The counterinsurgents found converted guerrillas as valuable a weapon against fragmented resistance as the informer network and "a more accurate and stealthy tool" than regular security troops and even similar units made up of policemen because the converts knew the methods and tactics of guerrillas and could penetrate their ranks effectively. Provincial administrators recommended a more intensive employment of commandos for the liquidation of guerrilla units and especially their leaders.[65] In the early 1950s, the Estonian police eliminated most guerrilla leaders with the hands of converted agents.[66]

[63] Riasnoi to Beria (13 March 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 94, ll. 133–135.

[64] S. Oleksenko to Khrushchev, "Spravka o khode bor'by s banditizmom [Report on the struggle against banditry]" (December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1695, ll. 308–315; Document No. 5 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 402–406. On similar actions in Lithuania, see Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred," pp. 209, 210.

[65] Documents No. 12 and 13 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 6, pp. 99, 104.

[66] Document No. 4 in Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy,* pp. 242–276.

The contract between the authorities and the commandos presumed that the latter would receive full pardon after they fulfilled their mission. As a rule, they were indeed amnestied, and those who had performed particularly well were awarded decorations.[67] Often, however, the party officials and police, having no sympathy for the converts, repeatedly assigned them new missions even after their cover had been blown. When Khrushchev heard this, he forbade this practice, telling provincial party secretaries that they could use commandos only once for a particular operation, and "after they accomplish it, we should consider them as having atoned for their guilt and let them go." He explained: "They came from the [guerrilla] bands to save their lives; instead, we endanger their lives. Don't do this."[68]

The steady infiltration of Ukrainian resistance by police agents prompted OUN leaders to order SB to root out treason "with all available means (execution by firing squad, hanging and even quartering). … In the course of liquidating the designated persons, spare neither adult members of their families nor their children."[69] Hundreds of informers and their families and hundreds of innocent civilians whom guerrillas wrongly accused of being informers were killed in a gruesome way in order to discourage other civilians from cooperating with the police. Even if guerrillas punished those who indeed were informers, most peasants were horrified when their neighbors suffered the fate described in the NKVD report filed in May 1944: UPA fighters cut off M. Il'chuk's head with a hand saw, beheaded his 14-year-old daughter with an axe, and shot dead his three-year-old son, his wife, another daughter, and his mother.[70] Such repressions drove a wedge between guerrillas and civilians, which was the strategic goal of Soviet counterinsurgents. Furthermore, SB launched a massive purge of UPA. In November 1945, a police unit pursuing a UPA band in Volyn' Province, found 18 bodies of guerrillas strangled on order of their commander, who accused them of treason. In December 1945, the police captured a report on SB activities in the OUN-Northwest region from January to August. During this period, it executed 835 guerrillas on suspicion that they were police informers.[71] Ivan Lytvynchuk ("Dubovyi"), commander of UPA-North from 1945, whom Ukrainian nationalists regard as one of the greatest heroes of the resistance, executed over 20 guerrillas, including two

[67] Trofimov, acting head of GUBB, to Riasnoi "Soobshchenie o razoblachenii agentury OUN [Report on the exposure of OUN agents]" (no date), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 573, ll. 106, 107.

[68] Document No. 73 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 170; "Stenogramma rechi t. Khrushcheva na zasedanii sekretarei obkomov [Minutes of Comrade Khrushchev's speech at the meeting of secretaries of Provincial Party Committees]" (15 May 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2420, l. 8.

[69] Burds, "*Agentura,*" pp. 104, 105.

[70] Document No. 68 in Serhiichuk, *OUN-UPA v roky viiny,* p. 152; Burds, "Gender and Policing," p. 308.

[71] Profatilov, "Ezhednevnaia svodka [Daily report]" (29 October 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1720, l. 147; Profatilov to Khrushchev, "Otchet Volynskogo obkoma KP(b)U o likvidatsii

regional OUN heads.[72] However, he failed to eradicate treason by such drastic measures and fell victim to police agents in 1952.

The undercover agents planted in guerrilla bands and commando units delivered the most valuable information to the police. The intelligence acquired via informers was usually of lower quality on a piece-by-piece count, but since they greatly outnumbered the undercover agents and commandos, they brought a comparable volume of valuable data. The network of small single-mission commando units organized from converts proved to be far more effective than the commando companies made up of policemen. The operations of Soviet informers and undercover agents, the guerrilla repressions against civilians that they provoked, as well as the purges of insurgents devastated resistance and dwindled its base of support.

9.4 Investigation Procedures

Another important source of intelligence was the interrogation of captured guerrillas and suspects. Whatever the criminal code said about procedure, in practice, the Soviet security agencies had few restrictions on arrests and investigations. MGB Minister Viktor Abakumov explained to Stalin in July 1947 how his subordinates conducted inquiries: "Following the directive of the VKP(b) Central Committee of 10 January 1939 [Stalin's instructions about torture during investigations], MGB uses *physical methods of coercion*."[73] Beating was the primary among such methods, and sometimes the police beat to death suspects who denied their guilt. Military prosecutors of the Internal Troops in Latvia reported the death of 18 percent of suspects during interrogation in one district.[74] Ingenious policemen sought to develop their interrogation technique. Police of Ternopol Province admitted that some of its men used "barbaric tortures." A party inspector described how policemen connected electrical wires from a field telephone to the hands of an interrogated man and produced electric shocks by rotating the handle.[75] Some interrogators burned suspects' skin with cigarettes. In March 1945, two police officers

ostatkov band ukrainsko-nemetskikh natsionalistov," l. 119. See similar cases in GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 304, l. 20; d. 313, l. 26; d. 315, l. 21; d. 316, ll. 27–50; d. 317, ll. 21–50; RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 144, l. 44; TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 334; d. 1717, l. 6.

[72] "Ezhednevnaia svodka o khode bor'by s banditizmom po Volynskoi oblasti [Daily report on the struggle against banditry in Volyn Province (4 October 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1720.

[73] Document No. 343 in Hilda Sabbo, ed., *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 2 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 990 (emphasis in the original).

[74] Documents No. 138 and 139 in Elmars Pelakus, ed. *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia* (Riga: Nordik, 1999), pp. 284–286.

[75] "Protokol Nr. 3 [Protocol no. 3]" (3 April 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2450, l. 5; Grushetskii to Stoiantsev, "O rezul'tatakh proverki faktov ukazannykh v spravke instruktora TsK KP(b)U Stepanenko [Inspection of the facts reported by Stepanenko]" (12 August 1946), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 424, l. 140.

arrested without a warrant a Ukrainian woman they suspected of connection with the resistance and then interrogated her by placing her barefoot on a heated stove, severely burning her feet. When questioned by party inspectors, the policemen admitted that "grilling arrested persons on a stove … is a mediaeval method that should not be employed." The perpetrators received 10-year jail terms, but torture remained among the major means of investigation until the end of Stalinism despite numerous directives ordering the police to observe the law.[76]

It is debatable how much such methods advanced the pacification, and Soviet agencies themselves could not come to consensus on this matter. After all, "if torture always failed, it would never be used."[77] Some police officers believed that this was a rational means to acquire information, whereas others questioned the credibility of intelligence gained under duress. Since Soviet jurisprudence accepted Vyshinskii's postulate that confession equaled guilt[78] and followed it until Stalin's death, the police focused on extracting confessions while ignoring other evidence or even falsifying the evidence to attain a guilty verdict. V. Gusarov, military prosecutor of the Lvov Frontier District, found "an obvious lack of objectivity, bias, the intention to get from suspects and witnesses only accusatory information without thoroughly checking its credibility." Officers "falsify protocols, use illegal interrogation methods and thus extract confessions from persons who had committed no crimes. They acquire [false] evidence against these persons by intimidating the witnesses."[79] F. Budagovskii, member of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania found in 1947 that police, "having no skill and desire to search for band members … took the dangerous path of falsifying [criminal] cases against innocent people." They sent commandos recruited from converted insurgents to loyal peasants, forced them under the threat of execution to contact the insurgents, and then arrested these peasants. Budagovskii concluded: "This practice must be immediately stopped, and those guilty in falsifying [criminal] cases must be severely punished."[80] While party leaders disapproved of fraud during investigation and sometimes, rather rarely, punished those responsible, they demanded the quick termination of the insurgency and were willing to turn a blind eye to law violations believed to be conducive to success. In this context, torture

[76] Document No. 23 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 144; Kompanets, "Postanovlenie Biuro Ternopol'skogo obkoma [Directive of the Ternopol Provincial Party Committee]" (4 June 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2383, l. 3; "Protokol Nr. 3," l. 5; Il'in, deputy head of the NKGB personnel office of the Ternopol Province, "Spravka o sostoianii prestupnosti [Report on crime rate]" (20 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2436, l. 132.

[77] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War,* p. 176.

[78] Peter Solomon, *Sovetskaia iustitsiia pri Staline* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1998), p. 347.

[79] V. Gusarov, military prosecutor of the Frontier Guard Troops in the Lvov Military District (3 January 1952), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 4, d. 512, ll. 47, 56.

[80] Document No. 2.17 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, pp. 287, 288.

was inevitable because the police viewed it as the simplest means of acquiring vital information. Every party leader knew that the police tortured prisoners, but few objected. In 1948, tribunals sent 22 percent of criminal cases against guerrilla suspects for additional investigation because they found the evidence presented by interrogators inconclusive or the accused and witnesses retracted their testimonies given under duress.[81] In 1947–1950, 10,273 persons arrested in Lithuania were acquitted as innocent.[82] Since the populations of the western borderlands knew how the police treated detainees, many cornered guerrillas offered stiff resistance in hopeless situations because they preferred to die in battle rather than under torture.

Nonetheless, torture and intimidation gave the police an enormous amount of intelligence, which police officers, unaware of sophisticated interrogation methods, would not have received otherwise. On 14 October 1944, the frontier guards arrested an instructor of the UPA Junior Commander School. He betrayed the location of the school, and the next day the police raided it, killing 185 and capturing 5 cadets – the cream of the UPA junior officers. When on 18 October 1944 the police captured Silvester Malaniuk, head of the UPA intelligence section in Stanislav Province, he showed them to the camps of two UPA battalions. The police attacked the camps and killed 177 and arrested 48 guerrillas.[83] The police reports do not give details of how this information was acquired, but probably investigators handled the prisoners in their usual way. While all party bureaucrats understood that the police ruined the lives of many innocent people wrongly accused by tortured prisoners, most believed that intelligence received in this way let them focus on the opposition and thus avoid the sweeping repressions that they inevitably would have conducted in its absence.

9.5 Intimidation

The civilians who gave insurgents conditional and passive support greatly outnumbered the members of the resistance. The authorities sought to intimidate them into neutrality by launching a series of show trials. In March 1944, when the Red Army had overrun only a fraction of western Ukraine, Beria wrote to Stalin: "The arrested active members of OUN and armed bandit groups will be tried by military tribunals, and the local population will be informed about the death sentences issued by tribunals."[84] Soon Beria decided that mere announcement of the sentences in newspapers was insufficient to attain the desired effect, and beginning in April 1944, executions were held in public in villages where the accused had killed their victims. This was an innovation in Soviet punitive practice. In the interwar period, death sentences were carried

[81] Document No. 93 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3, p. 319.
[82] Document No. 9.20 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 3, p. 115.
[83] Beria to Stalin (15 November 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 67, l. 360.
[84] Beria to Stalin (14 March 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 64, l. 172.

out in secluded jail basements or NKVD bases deep in the woods. Soviet leaders regarded hanging as barbaric, and the only method of execution permitted by the criminal code was death by firing squad. However, the war brutalized society, and on 19 April 1943, the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union issued a decree adding hanging to the punitive practice. It was reserved for Nazi war criminals who had committed grisly atrocities but also for "traitors to the Motherlands and their accomplices among Soviet citizens,"[85] and the state regarded resistance members as such.

Soviet show trials in the 1930s and those in the western borderlands served different purposes. The goal of the former was to persuade the Soviets that those whom they regarded as the party elite were in fact traitors and thus to unify them behind the Stalinist faction. A public execution could only have spoiled the impression attained by the confessions made in front of journalists in the courtroom. In contrast, the show trials in the borderlands prosecuted obvious enemies of the regime; they had to demonstrate the futility of resistance and to teach guerrilla sympathizers a lesson. As Khrushchev, explained, "In order to intimidate the bandits, those sentenced to death … should be hanged rather than shot. The trials should be open and the local population should be invited. … The execution of the sentence pronounced by a tribunal should be carried out publicly in the village where the sentenced committed the crime. This will sober the bandits."[86] The desired effect could not be attained by prosecution of senior guerrilla leaders because peasants did not know them and because, being more educated, they could use the occasion to propagate their views. Instead, military colleges of the Supreme Court of the USSR traveled across Ukraine, Belorussia, and Lithuania and picked among the local residents defendants known to everyone, usually minor commanders or even privates who had publicly killed local activists. Attendance at the hearings was semiobligatory, and sometimes the authorities herded as many as 8,000 peasants from several surrounding villages to watch the trial.

Show trials made up only a small proportion of the trials held during the counterinsurgency campaign. Since the prosecution picked the most notorious guerrillas for the show, their sentences typically were far more severe than those of most defendants whose cases were heard in camera. In 1945, the Military Tribunal of the Lithuanian NKVD sentenced 8,675 persons for participation in armed resistance; of them, 468 persons, or 5.4 percent, received the death penalty, but fewer than half these sentences actually were carried out.[87] Most defendants whose cases were heard on show trials were sentenced to capital punishment or hard labor for 15 or 20 years.[88] During the last six months of 1945, 22 such trials were held in Lithuania. At the first 8 of them,

[85] Document No. 31 in Vasil'ev et al., *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy,* p. 113.
[86] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 254.
[87] Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml',* p. 241.
[88] Document No. 2 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 194; Riasnoi to Kruglov (14 April 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 130, l. 19.

13 guerrillas received the death penalty, 11 were sentenced to hard labor, and 1 was acquitted.[89] Several dozen cases passed through open hearings between April 1944 and early 1946, and there were several more public trials in the fall of 1949 and in 1954–1959.[90]

The police also practiced another form of intimidation. They brought bodies of insurgents killed in action to the nearest village and dumped them in the squares, often in sitting positions against house walls, with weapons in their hands to emphasize that these were armed enemies who deserved their fate. Meanwhile, the police secretly watched the public reaction.[91] The display of guerrillas' corpses served a triple purpose: to discourage peasants from supporting the insurgency, to identify the dead, and to pinpoint those who knew them and to investigate whether they were connected to the resistance.

Public executions took place between 1943 and 1951. The reports of party inspectors, for example, "the hanging was accompanied by loud applause of all those present,"[92] were probably newspaper clichés dating back to the trials of the Great Terror rather than a reflection of facts. The impact of the show trials was perhaps weaker in the Baltic region than in the Slavic ones; they were "to reveal the antipeople nature of *kulak*-nationalist bands,"[93] but since the judges did not speak the local languages and hearings were conducted via interpreters, peasants sympathized with the defendants rather than the foreigners who tried them. However, the goal of the trials and public executions was not to win sympathy but to intimidate. It is safe to assume that the grim shows discouraged many resistance supporters from helping the guerrillas.

Conclusion

Police methods evolved along with guerrilla tactics. At the first stage of counterinsurgency, which lasted from 1944 to early 1945, the NKVD security divisions were the major antiguerrilla tool, and they hit the insurgents hard. The Ukrainian and Lithuanian resistance movements, the strongest ones, suffered more casualties in 1944–1945 than throughout all the subsequent years, although the police body count included an unknown and probably considerable proportion of unarmed draft evaders and bystanders. The second stage began in 1945, after the guerrillas had dispersed in small cells, and continued until the end of the resistance. The security forces had to learn how to fight fragmented insurgency. Police tactics shifted from large-scale actions

[89] Antanas Sniečkus, "Otchet TsK KP(b)L [Report of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (26 November 1945), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 412, l. 3; Khaliavin, chair of the military tribunal of NKVD troops in Lithuania (1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 18, ll. 78, 79.

[90] Document No. 35 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 7, p. 228; Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 390.

[91] Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred," pp. 214–216.

[92] Document No. 2 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 194, 195.

[93] Sniečkus, "Otchet TsK KP(b)L [Report of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (26 November 1945), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 412, l. 3.

to patrols and ambushes by small garrisons, covert operations, and collection of intelligence for surgical strikes. The informer network, undercover agents, and ruthless interrogation of prisoners yielded a great volume of fairly accurate data, while show trials and public executions prompted many potential resistance supporters to stay neutral.

Counterinsurgency tactics in the borderlands were conspicuous not so much for dramatic innovation as for the effective adaptation of methods developed earlier to a new environment. Experience in maintaining a pervasive informer network in the old territories helped the authorities to establish it in the borderlands, and the police quickly adjusted the operation of the network to totally different conditions – brutal and fluid guerrilla warfare. The police employed basically the same investigative methods as it had practiced in the interwar period, but they showed much imagination in extracting information from uncooperative prisoners. The Soviets learned how to infiltrate enemy units, undermine their combat capacity, and compromise their commanders during the fight against German collaborators, and they applied this experience to counterinsurgency. The major original aspect of police tactics in the western borderlands was the commando groups disguised as insurgents or German collaborators. The Soviet agents sowed suspicion among resistance members, shattered their morale, eliminated key leaders, provoked the purge of thousands and the defection of thousands more, and helped the authorities to drive a wedge between civilians and the resistance that alienated people with chaotic reprisals in an attempt to root out treason. Moral constraints were not an issue: The Soviet regime was prepared to use virtually any means to crush the insurgency and viewed the punitive expeditions into rebellious regions as an option in the absence of information. In this context, covert operations and ruthless intelligence collection allowed the police to reduce the number of unintended victims.

10

The Church in Soviet Security Policy

A small-town priest comes to the party secretary and asks him to lend a few chairs for the Easter service. The secretary is in a bad mood and refuses. This dialogue follows:

PRIEST: "If so, you won't get seminary students for volunteer labor on Lenin's birthday."
SECRETARY: "Well, then I won't send Komsomol members to sing in the church choir."
PRIEST: "Then you'll get neither church wine for your party meetings, nor nuns to entertain you afterward."
SECRETARY: "This is really outrageous! You'll be expelled from the Communist party!"

– A Soviet joke

While invariably oppressive toward religion after 1917 and throughout the interwar period, the Soviet government made a dramatic shift of policy in 1943 when Stalin opted for a "concordat" with the Russian Orthodox Church. This act led to a frenzied rapprochement between the state and the Orthodox Church and some other denominations in the lands under Soviet control. Only then did the Soviet state make a consistent effort to employ the clergy for the war effort and later for pacification of the borderlands. Religion was a minor factor in the war between the pro- and anti-Soviet forces in the old territories because the younger generation, the primary source of manpower in the Red Army and partisan and antipartisan collaborator forces, was largely atheist.[1] Religious sentiments were far stronger in the borderlands, although their impact on the decision to choose sides is difficult to measure. The attitude of the borderland clergy toward the war on the Eastern Front and the fight between the Soviet state and nationalist resistance was quite diverse. Priests were a part of society; they shared its sentiments but were constrained by orders

[1] Karel Berkhoff, "Was There a Religious Revival in Soviet Ukraine under the Nazi Regime?" *The Slavonic and East European Review* 78(3):565, 2000.

of the church hierarchs. The position of the hierarchs also varied depending on the status of the church and its internal structure, Soviet and German religious policies, the situation on the fronts, and personal sentiments, such as concern about their flock, nationalism, fear of the authorities or guerrillas, disgust with actions incompatible with Christian ethics, and opportunism. The Soviet regime reduced the borderland churches to state servants with a combination of repression and compromise and then employed them for the pacification of western regions. Although the head-on attack on the Uniate Church made within the general framework of Soviet centralization turned out to be counterproductive in the short run, in other cases the relatively small investment made into directing church activities toward pacification helped the Soviet regime undermine nationalist resistance and legitimize its rule or at least secure the compliance of borderland populations.

Given the oppression the church experienced in the interwar period, Soviet leaders expected the clergy to collaborate with the invaders. During the first months of the war, partisans operating in the occupied regions continued to perceive the clergy as class enemies; they opposed the opening of churches by the Germans and even executed an unknown number of priests.[2] To the surprise of the Soviet government, however, most Orthodox hierarchs in the old territories took a patriotic stance from the first days of the German onslaught. Sergii (Stragorodskii), Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, issued a proclamation on 22 June 1941 in which he wrote: "With God's help [the Russian people] will crush (*razveet v prakh*) the fascist enemy force. … The Church of Christ blesses all Orthodox people defending the sacred frontiers of our Motherland."[3] In his subsequent series of appeals, he referred to Hitler as the Antichrist and explained that in conformity with Orthodox tradition, the church "invariably recognizes the Soviet power in the USSR as established by God." Bogdan Kobulov, deputy people's commissar of NKVD, wrote in this connection: "Secretly orchestrating these steps, politically beneficial to our state, NKVD prints these patriotic documents and distributes them in the [occupied] territory."[4]

Soon after the beginning of the German invasion, the Soviet government began to emphasize the unity of the Soviet nation in the face of mortal danger and to eliminate the agencies that worked against this concept, among them the Militant Godless League, which was shut down in the fall of 1941. The authorities stopped persecuting the church, terminated two major antireligious

[2] B. N. Kovalev, "Antifashistskaia bor'ba: analiz propagandistskogo protivostoianiia," Ph.D. dissertation, St. Petersburg University, 1993, p. 168; Stepan Petrovich to the CC of the Belorussian Communist party, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]"(10 September 1941), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 480, l. 169.

[3] Tat'iana Chumachenko, *Gosudarstvo, Pravoslavnaia tserkov', veruiushchie* (Moscow: Pervaia monografiia, 1999), p. 11.

[4] Harvey Fireside, *Icon and Swastika: The Russian Orthodox Church under the Nazi and Soviet Control* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 53, 172; Kobulov to Shcherbakov (1 October 1942), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 93, l. 18.

journals, *Bezbozhnik* and *Antireligioznik,* and the Moscow radio began broadcasting a religious hour along with the patriotic appeals of Orthodox hierarchs.[5] In October 1942, the Central Partisan Headquarters ordered partisan commanders to find out whether "the church could be used in the fight against German invaders."[6] The reply was apparently affirmative, as were police reports from the Soviet-held lands, which prompted Soviet leaders to think how to exploit the prestige of the church in the war effort.

In September 1943, Stalin suddenly reversed the religious policy the Soviet state had pursued since the Bolshevik Revolution. The "concordat" he proposed directed that the Soviet state would take a benevolent position toward the church, whereas the latter would promote the government's agenda. Stalin allowed the Russian Orthodox Church to restore the position of the Patriarch that had remained vacant after the death of Tikhon in 1925, and on 8 September 1943, Sergii, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, was elected Patriarch. The government released clerics kept in labor camps, sanctioned the reopening of the Orthodox Seminary, and issued a directive entitled, "Opening of Churches," after which the number of operating churches grew for the first time since the Bolshevik Revolution. This process was slow: Only 718 churches were opened in Soviet-held territory during the war, as opposed to 7,547 in the occupied lands. However, the government refrained from closing churches that had been opened during the German occupation in the regions overrun by the Red Army.[7] It allowed publication of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate,* which partisans then delivered across the front and distributed among the population. Sometimes partisans even prayed with villagers.[8] This reversal of policy toward the church was not an act of desperation – by that time the Red Army was quickly advancing westward. It is likely that Stalin did this to improve the image of the Soviet Union among the Western Allies and to use the prestige of the Russian Orthodox Church to legitimize the Soviet regime in the borderlands and reduce clerical opposition in the eastern European countries the Red Army planned to overrun.

The Russian Orthodox Church viewed the patriotic propaganda, the prevention of collaboration with the enemy, the struggle against schisms and fund-raising as primary aspects of its cooperation with the state. Sergii wrote in his appeal to Orthodox believers in the occupied lands: "As good patriots, all of you should give full support to the partisans, and if you cannot directly

[5] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika,* pp. 168, 174–175.

[6] General Argunov, chief of Intelligence Department of the Central Partisan Headquarters, "Spisok voprosov podgotovlennykh otdelom informatsii [List of questions prepared by the information section]" (22 October 1942), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 754, l. 144.

[7] Ivan Ia. Shimon, "Otnoshenia sovetskogo gosudarstva i Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi v period Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny, 1941–1945," Ph.D. dissertation, Military University, Moscow, 1995, p. 194; Vadim Iakunin, "Patrioticheskaia deiatel'nost' Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi i izmenenie gosudarstvenno-tserkovnykh otnoshenii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny," Ph.D. dissertation, Samara, 1998, p. 150.

[8] RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 7, l. 565; Kovalev, "Antifashistskaia bor'ba," p. 170.

fight in their ranks, help them by all means."[9] The Orthodox Bishop Council warned collaborators:

> Some clerics and laymen have no fear of God and dare to profit from the common misfortune: [They] welcome the Germans as honourable guests, work for them and sometimes commit direct treason by betraying their brothers-partisans and others who sacrifice themselves for the Motherland. … Judas ruined his soul and body and suffered the supreme punishment even in this world. In the same way, those traitors reserve for themselves eternal torment and will not escape Cain's plight in this world. … Anyone guilty of treason to the Church cause – who has defected to the fascists – is excommunicated as an enemy of the Holy Cross, and any cleric is unfrocked. Amen.[10]

This was a powerful message. When Metropolitan Sergii (Voskresenskii), the Orthodox Exarch of Latvia and Estonia, sent telegrams greeting Hitler and called for struggle against the Communists, the Orthodox Council (*sobor*) unfrocked him in 1943; a year later he was killed by unknown assassins.[11] Sergii, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, called Polykarp, Primate of the Autocephalous Ukrainian Church, a "wolf in sheep's clothing" and Hitler's lackey.[12] Since all nationalists but the Polish ones collaborated with the Germans, the position of the Russian Orthodox Church prompted some Orthodox believers to stay away from armed struggle despite sympathy to nationalist ideals.

In the occupied borderlands, Orthodox priests worked under triple German, partisan, and nationalist control. Most tried to steer clear of politics. Deprived of this option, some collaborated with the Germans, and some served the nationalist guerrillas, but most followed the Patriarch's orders, and the number of the latter increased as the Red Army advanced westward. As Father Grigorii Chaus from Polesie explained, "A partisan commissar came to me … checked the content of my sermons, crossed out some parts, such as a prayer for Tsar Nicholas and some others and added some things, and I follow these [guidelines]."[13] Some priests served as partisan scouts; others were members of tribunals trying collaborators.[14] Aleksandr Saburov, a famous partisan commander and NKVD general, did not shy away from posing with a scout-priest in front of a Ukrainian church for a photograph.[15] The Orthodox clergy facilitated the defection of hundreds of collaborators. Several priests were awarded

[9] Sergii, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna (no date), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 188, l. 17.

[10] The Orthodox Bishop Council, "Osuzhdenie izmennikov Otechestvu [Condemnation of the traitors to the motherland]" (8 September 1943), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 7, l. 561.

[11] Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia* (London: Macmillan, 1957), pp. 489, 490.

[12] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika,* p. 174.

[13] Avkhimovich to Ponomarenko (26 October 1943), RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 7, l. 545.

[14] "Politinformatsiia [On the political situation]" (19 July 1943), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 554, ll. 4–6; Iakunin, "Patrioticheskaia deiatel'nost'," p. 93; V. I. Klokov, *Kovel'skii uzel* (Kiev: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1981), p. 149.

[15] RGASPI, f. 625, op. 1, d. 7, l. 525.

medals for their service; Father Vasilii of Pinsk Province, western Belorussia, earned three of them, including a medal naming him "Partisan of the Great Patriotic War" and another bestowed "For Valiant Labor."[16]

By the time the Red Army approached the borderlands, the Soviet regime and the Russian Orthodox Church were acting in unison. Since the Orthodox churches in Belorussia and the Baltic region were merely branches of the Russian Orthodox Church, whereas the Autonomous Orthodox Ukrainian Church recognized the canonical supremacy of the Moscow Patriarchate, the position of the Moscow hierarchy was an important factor in the attitude of the borderland Orthodox community toward the Soviet-German-nationalist conflict.

Soviet leaders knew the church retained far greater prestige in the borderlands than in the old territories, and they sought to demonstrate that their religious policy had changed since 1939–1941. They at first abstained from unprovoked repressions against the clergy, emphasized the clause of the Soviet constitution that guaranteed freedom of religion, and exempted priests from military service.[17] When local Communist leaders, slow to adapt to the zigzags of the party line, resumed the atheistic crusade, Moscow accused them of "leftist deviation" that violated the current policy. Those guilty of random violence against the clergy were promptly punished.[18] In February 1945, the Politburo of the Ukrainian Communist party condemned officials who would close churches and "tactlessly intervene into liturgies. These actions are wrong; in fact, these are provocations."[19] NKVD General Ivan Tkachenko warned the police that they ought not to "oppress [Lithuanian] believers, insult their religious feelings and take other actions that can provoke discontent."[20] Lithuanian Bishop Teofilis Matulionis found the government's attitude toward the church "considerably different and better than in 1940–1941."[21]

The government knew that in the borderlands all churches except the Russian Orthodox Church were anti-Soviet, but their attitude toward other political actors varied. While the Ukrainian Autocephalous and Uniate churches collaborated with the enemy, the Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches abstained from serving the Germans. Encouraged by the mutually

[16] Olga Vasil'eva, "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' v politike sovetskogo gosudarstva," Ph.D. dissertation, Moscow State University, 1998, p. 108.

[17] Henriks Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands in den Jahren des Kommunismus (1940–1990)," *Acta Baltica* 31:79, 1993.

[18] Document No. 12.2 in Vytautas Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m,* Vol. 3 (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), p. 222; George Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred: Lithuanian Nationalism during the Triple Occupation, 1939–1953," Ph.D. dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston, 2003, p. 125.

[19] O. E. Lysenko, "Do pytannia pro stanovyshche tserkvy v Ukraini u period druhoi svitovoi viiny," *UIZh* 3:77, 1995.

[20] Document No. 12.5 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 3, p. 228.

[21] V. Stanley Vardys, *The Catholic Church, Dissent and Nationality in Soviet Lithuania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 66, 76. A year later, however, this outspoken bishop was arrested and sentenced to a seven-year prison term.

profitable cooperation with the church in the old territories, Soviet leaders engaged the clergy in pacification of the borderlands.

Most top religious hierarchs submitted to the Soviet regime.[22] What were their motivations to cooperate, apart from concerns about their own safety? They worried that rejection of government demands would provoke the Soviets to eliminate their churches at a moment when rapprochement with the state seemed possible.[23] Being realistic, they found those who expected an Allied invasion to be "very naive."[24] Sheptyts'kyi concluded: "Now, given the circumstances of the international situation, there is but one choice – to [reconcile] with Soviet power."[25] The Estonian Lutheran Church never supported anti-Soviet resistance[26] because its priests believed it was futile and felt that it was their Christian duty to avert pointless bloodshed. Finally, the Russian Orthodox Church cooperated more enthusiastically than the others because it appreciated the state's assistance in its struggle against rival denominations.

However, many parish priests shared nationalist sentiments with the anti-Soviet resistance, and some supported it against the orders of their superiors. Most of them engaged in nonviolent forms of resistance, such as delivering sermons with calls to ignore Soviet orders.[27] A small minority participated directly in armed struggle. They collected supplies for guerrillas, printed and distributed anti-Soviet literature, and some actually fought. In July 1945, the police arrested Bardašauskas, a Catholic priest who headed the local committee of the Union of Lithuanian Partisans in Trakai province.[28] Lithuanian priest Justinas Lelešius was a regional guerrilla commander; he died in a shootout with the police.[29] The police found a printing press used for publishing the Lithuanian *Freedom Scout* underground newspaper in a bunker dug in a church yard by Antanas Ilius, a Catholic priest who turned out to be a VLIK member. Juozas Stankunas, another Lithuanian priest, was a member of the presidium of the Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement.[30] In 1946, the police

[22] Heinrihs Strods, "The Roman Catholic Church of Latvia and the Resistance Movement (1944–1950)," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 1999), pp. 177, 178.

[23] Vardys, *The Catholic Church,* p. 66.

[24] Arunas Streikus, "The Resistance of the Church to the Soviet Regime from 1944 to 1967," in Arvydas Anušauskas, ed., *The Anti-Soviet resistance in the Baltic States* (Vilnius: Du Ka, 1999), p. 86.

[25] Jeffrey Burds, "Ethnicity, Memory and Violence: Reflections on Special Problems in Soviet and East European Archives," in Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg, eds., *Archives, Documentation, and the Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar, 2000–2001* (Ann Arbour, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), p. 472.

[26] Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi* (Kyiv: Pul'sary, 2002), p. 497.

[27] Tkachenko to Leontiev (21 September 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 280.

[28] Tkachenko to Leontiev, "Special Report" (6 July 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 73.

[29] Vardys, *The Catholic Church,* p. 70.

[30] Document No. 111 in N. I . Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine,*

apprehended Ludvigs Štagars, a Latvian Catholic pastor from Škilbani, who had commanded a large guerrilla unit since 1944.[31]

However, more priests reluctantly collaborated with the Soviet regime than acted against it, thus helping the Soviets terminate the insurgency. The Communists expected the church to perform the following: help the government legitimize Soviet rule in the borderlands and form a Soviet nested identity among believers, encourage eligible recruits to enlist in the Red Army, inform the police about subversion, and facilitate the surrender of nationalist guerrillas. The authorities viewed mobilization into the Red Army as an integral part of pacification because it drained the pool of potential guerrilla recruits. As soon as Soviet rule was established in the borderlands, the government instructed church hierarchs to endorse conscriptions.[32] The anti-Nazi, if not necessarily pro-Soviet sermons delivered by borderland parish priests eased for religious young men the decision to report for mobilization. After Catholic priests in Stanislav Province called on the Polish congregation, typically skeptical of Soviet values, to join the Red Army in May 1944, the Polish recruits arrived at a military conscription office in a column headed by a playing band.[33]

The Soviet leaders engaged clerics in counterinsurgency for the first time during the suppression of rebellions in the North Caucasus in early 1944, when they requested that mullahs call on Moslems to abstain from resistance and to facilitate the surrender of guerrillas.[34] The Soviets were pleased with the outcome, and when the Red Army overran the borderlands, they continued this policy, pressing clergy to advance the government's agenda. Some clerics wrote their appeals themselves after coordinating their content with the police, as did Nikolai (Iarushevich), Orthodox Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich, who issued numerous statements condemning UPA[35]; others were compelled to do so by the police, as was Stanislovas Jokubauskis, head of the Kaunas Archdiocese, who in June 1945 called Lithuanian guerrillas to surrender and obliged parish priests to read this address to their congregations.[36] Sometimes the police issued proclamations under the signature of clergymen who had no idea they had "written" them.[37] The pledge signed by Lithuanian

v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), 314; Streikus, "The Resistance of the Church," p. 85.

[31] Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands," p. 87.

[32] Document No. 49 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), p. 139.

[33] "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 2:95, 1995.

[34] Beria to Stalin (21 February 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 64, l. 833.

[35] John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (Englewood: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1990), p. 148.

[36] Kobulov to Beria, "Dokladnaia zapiska o khode bor'by s banditizmom i anti-Sovetskim podpol'em v Litovskoi SSR [Report on the struggle against banditry and the anti-Soviet underground in Lithuania]" (June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 48.

[37] V. Stanley Vardys, "The Partisan Movement in Postwar Lithuania," in V. StanleyVardys, ed., *Lithuania Under the Soviets* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 104; Romuald Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States* (London: Hurst & Co, 1993), p. 125.

Bishop Kaziemiras Paltarokas shows what the authorities expected the clergy to do in order to help the government suppress resistance. He had

1. To use his position as head of the diocese in directing the clergy toward loyalty to the Soviet power and to instruct ordinary believers in the same spirit;
2. To forbid the clergy categorically to use pulpit for the anti-Soviet propaganda … ;
3. … to prevent priests from participating in [anti-Soviet] partisan formations or supporting them in any way, and to explain to religious partisans the harm that the partisan actions inflict on the nation and the Church.[38]

The Soviet police believed addresses by the church hierarchs were a reasonably effective means of influencing public opinion and persuading guerrillas to accept amnesty. In December 1946, Sniečkus ordered provincial party leaders in Lithuania: "Please prepare loyal priests for delivering sermons and calling for the end of armed struggle and legalization of bandits, and also for individual work with bandit relatives."[39] Even if resistance leaders were atheist, as in the case of OUN, most of their fighters were religious. On 16 June 1944, a priest from Babitsy Village persuaded an entire UPA battalion to surrender with all its 326 fighters.[40]

As in the old territories, the police recruited informers among borderland priests from the bottom to the top of the church hierarchy. In June 1945, Kobulov ordered the police to recruit agents among the Catholic clergy, and the police created special sections tasked with the infiltration of the clergy.[41] MGB instructed police officers to "surreptitiously approach" priests in rebellious regions who had to be "bent to our side and brought under our influence." Those refusing to cooperate were to be compromised "with concrete, checked, and indisputable facts, but ones that do not hurt the religious sentiments of those priests who are friends of the regime."[42] Usually priests were recruited under duress. The police placed Henriks Trops, a Latvian priest, into a narrow cage where he could only stand in human waste on the floor and gave him no food or water until two days later, when he signed a pledge to cooperate.[43]

[38] Streikus, "The Resistance of the Church," p. 88.

[39] Document No. 4.14 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 2, p. 96.

[40] Riasnoi to Kruglov, "Soobshcheniie o khode bor'by s ounovskim banditizmom [Information on the struggle against OUN banditry]" (17 June 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 125, l. 68; Kruglov to Beria (27 June 1944), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 125, l. 21.

[41] Document No. 12.1 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 3, p. 220; Kobulov to Beria, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (no date), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 18.

[42] Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred," p. 233.

[43] Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche," p. 81.

Some police agents among the priests took confessions from guerrillas or their relatives and then passed the information to the NKVD; others served as raiding agents while traveling from one village to another and selling ritual items. A typical report of a priest-informer states: "From 25 to 27 October 1944, many congregation members in Bortkovo Village asked me, as a priest, whether they should deliver the tax of two to four centners of grain, meat and other food to UPA. In addition, some believers told me that UPA is preparing an uprising against Soviet authority on 1 November 1944." Although this priest refused to identify his sources, with reference to his clerical duties,[44] the police nonetheless had received an important piece of intelligence.

Reports of the Latvian Communist party reveal that Soviet officials displayed imagination, ideological flexibility, and their customary ruthlessness to get the desired results. Of all Latvian believers, 24 percent were Catholic and 55 percent Lutheran.[45] The party pressed both churches into promoting its agenda and often attained resounding success:

> The VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia pointed out to party and Soviet leaders of the Republic that they should pursue the sovietization of these religious organizations [the Catholic and the Lutheran churches] as the [institutions] most alien to the Soviet system and most influential among the people. The VKP(b) CC Bureau for Latvia recommended … local leaders to focus on the Archbishop [of Riga, Antonijs] Springovičs, Primate of the Latvian Catholics, … keeping in mind Springovičs' negative attitude to his superiors in Rome. … Long and painstaking work with him bore fruit. … In his appeal to believers, Springovičs called them to fight banditry and support all policies of the Soviet authorities. This greatly facilitated the exodus of bandits from forests. Springovičs … ordered a priest [Antons Juhnevičs] who was in touch with bandits to be interned for three years [in a monastery]. During elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Springovičs sent a special letter to believers with the appeal to fulfill their citizens' duty to the Motherland. If we summarize all activities of Springovičs, his deputies and the clergy that he supervises, we should acknowledge that they were loyal, active and efficient. We suggest that Moscow should think about how to use Springovičs and his subordinates both in the USSR and abroad, and how to attract him even more to the Soviet authorities and, perhaps, completely detach him from Rome. … Matters with the Lutheran Church were far worse: The reactionary leaders of this church made no effort to hide their hostility toward the Soviet system. The Church leaders, Bishop [Karlis] Irbe and his subordinates, followed the principle "The worse, the better." Here, we focused on the lower-ranking clergy and [pursued] the isolation of the Church leaders. … The clergy became disappointed with the Church hierarchs. When in 1946, Irbe and his closest subordinates were arrested, these arrests were met favorably or indifferently. New persons, who really wanted to collaborate with the Soviet authorities, became [Church] leaders. The overwhelming majority [of the clergy] supports the new leaders. On 9 May, for the first time since the liberation

[44] Voronin, head of NKGB of Lvov Province, "Spetssoobshcheniie [Special report]" (28 October 1944), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 67, l. 136.

[45] Riazanov, "O politicheskom i khoziaistvennom polozhenii v Latviiskoi SSR" (1946), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 11, l. 73.

of Soviet Latvia, the congregation prayed for the Soviet administration and appeals to believers calling to help the Soviet government by all means were issued. We trust that the Lutheran Church has become absolutely loyal to the Soviet government. … The sovietization of the top church hierarchy and, by and large the clergy as a whole has been accomplished.[46]

The Latvian Catholic priest Antons Juhnevičs mentioned in this report, an organizer of the Latvian Partisan Union for the Defense of the Motherland, kept supplies and sheltered guerrillas in a church cellar that had been turned into a bunker and was connected by underground passages with the forest. By 1946, however, he realized that resistance was futile and accepted Soviet amnesty. Springovičs rebuked Juhnevičs for the violation of Catholic canonical rules that prohibit participation of the clergy in armed struggle and the use of church buildings for military purposes. He punished Juhnevičs by ordering him to stay in a monastery for three years.[47] In his appeals, Springovičs praised "the heroic Red Army," called on believers to raise funds for the Soviet war effort, and ordered priests to offer thanksgiving prayers for the liberation of Latvia from the Nazis. He also condemned the guerrillas, whom he called "irresponsible young deserters" who "stain their hands with the blood of women and children" and commit sacrileges by keeping their supplies in church cellars. He and Bishop Peteris Strods requested that the guerrillas surrender and enlist in the Red Army,[48] and Springovičs ordered parish priests to read this request after the government declared amnesty. Springovičs called on believers to participate in the 1946 elections to the Supreme Soviet but demanded in return that the authorities restore a Catholic seminary in Latvia. That seminary was opened in March 1946, soon after Springovičs wrote the appeal.[49] While some believers thought Springovičs was a Soviet agent, many others felt obliged to follow the orders of the primate.

The policy of the Soviet state toward churches of various denominations depended on the churches' attitude toward the war on the Eastern Front, geopolitical considerations, the degree of control exercised by the state over churches, and the role each church's clergy played in the conflict between government forces and nationalists. Notwithstanding all these factors, however, the Soviet regime followed several strategic principles. First, it sought to incorporate all schismatic Orthodox churches into the Russian Orthodox Church for the sake of administrative convenience and easier control. Second, since the government could not direct the Catholic and Lutheran hierarchies as well as the Russian Orthodox one, it sought to prevent the spread of Catholicism and Lutheranism outside the regions where they were traditionally practiced.

[46] Ibid., RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 11, ll. 73–75.

[47] Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands," pp. 85–87; Strods, "The Roman Catholic Church of Latvia," p. 177.

[48] Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands," pp. 80–83; Strods, "The Roman Catholic Church of Latvia," pp. 177, 178.

[49] Trups-Trops, "Die Römisch-Katolische Kirche Lettlands," p. 89.

Furthermore, since the Soviet leaders perceived the borderland Catholic and Protestant churches as conducive of foreign influence, they encouraged their hierarchs to cut ties with the Vatican and with Protestant churches elsewhere and establish "national" churches, which would make them easier to control. Finally, they sought to suppress minor Protestant groups, also perceived as Western agencies. All these strategic principles coincided with the desires of the Russian Orthodox hierarchs.

The integration of the schismatic Orthodox churches proceeded smoothly. All bishops of the Autocephalous Ukrainian Church evacuated with the Germans, after which the church ceased to exist, and the Russian Orthodox Church absorbed its parishes. The Autonomous Ukrainian Church had been founded as a provisional entity from the start, and 6 of its 14 bishops who remained in Ukraine after the German evacuation helped the Russian Orthodox Church reintegrate their parishes as soon as Soviet rule was restored.[50] The authority of the Russian Orthodox Church among the Orthodox people of Belorussia and the Baltic region had remained virtually unchallenged during the German occupation. After the Soviets overran the borderlands, Orthodox believers found themselves with hierarchs who backed the government in its struggle against nationalist resistance.

Most Lutheran clerics fled with the Germans, and this further undermined the position of this church in the Baltic region, which had already been weakened in the interwar period.[51] Soviet repressions against Latvian Lutheran clerics unwilling to collaborate with the authorities weakened it even further; the police deported 35 of the 95 Lutheran priests who remained in Latvia in 1944, and 5 clerics were killed. Since the Estonian Lutheran Church tried to find a compromise with the Soviet state, it suffered proportionately less than the Latvian Lutheran clergy: 73 of its 423 priests, or 17 percent, were arrested between 1944 and 1953.[52]

The policy of the Soviet government toward the Catholic and Uniate churches depended most of all on relations between the Vatican and the Soviet Union, which, in turn, depended on relations between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies. In 1943–1944, when cooperation with the Allies was a matter of utmost importance, the Soviet government was ready to compromise with the Catholic and Uniate churches. It even took several half-hearted steps toward establishing relations with the Vatican in order to placate the Allies and public opinion in the Catholic countries the Red Army was preparing to overrun. However, the increasing anti-Communist rhetoric aired by Pope Pius XII in the face of the leftist surge in Europe, his calls for lenient peace terms for Germany, and Catholic opposition to the Soviets in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia reinforced Soviet hostility toward the Vatican in early

[50] Vasil'eva, "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov'," p. 153.

[51] Misiunas and Taagepera, *The Baltic States,* p. 125.

[52] Ibid., p. 126; Document No. 7 in Tynu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody (1944–1956)* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), p. 287.

1945. This political shift promised dire consequences for the Catholic and Uniate churches in the Soviet Union.

Communist functionaries reported: "The Church and Catholic priests who have a reactionary attitude toward Soviet authority enjoy the dominating influence in all Lithuanian and Polish circles."[53] It is safe to assume that had the Polish population remained in the disputed lands, the Polish Catholic Church in western Ukraine would have suffered the most severe repressions. With the forced "repatriation" of Poles, the major Roman Catholic component in western Ukraine and Belorussia vanished, and the authorities passed most Roman Catholic Church buildings to the Russian Orthodox Church. Only the Catholic Church in Lithuania and the Uniate Church in Ukraine retained strong positions.

With the preconceived notion of the Catholic Church as "an agent of international reaction" strengthened by the consistently anti-Soviet position of the Vatican and the Stalinist tendency to generalize, Soviet leaders found plenty of evidence to regard the Catholic Church as an "inspirer and organizer"[54] of nationalist resistance. The Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist party instructed provincial leaders "to split the Catholic clergy by pitching up priests loyal to the Soviet power against reactionary priests."[55] The authorities arrested Catholic priests at the slightest suspicion of subversion and replaced them with more obedient individuals. Only those who followed the orders of the authorities were safe.[56] The Catholic Church of Lithuania was less cooperative than that of Latvia. Most of the Lithuanian bishops refused to endorse the Soviet amnesties because they worried that the state would break its word. They firmly rejected the Soviet project of creating a "national church." As in other cases of alleged subversion, the authorities tended to interpret "anti-Soviet activities" of the clergy inclusively; although some of the arrested priests were involved in resistance, most had refused to become police agents or to promote the Soviet system in their sermons. These repressions broke the resistance of the Catholic Church. Prelate Bernardas Sužiedelis expressed the view of the clerical majority: "If the clergy adheres to a reactionary course, we will all be crushed. A way must be found to maintain contact with the authorities and achieve a modus vivendi with them."[57] By mid-1947, all but one Lithuanian diocese affirmed their allegiance to the authorities, and Canon Juozas Stankevičus, an influential cleric, presented his program for struggle against the resistance at the meeting of diocese heads in July 1947. Canon Vincentas Vizgirda, who headed the only diocese that refused to cooperate

[53] "Spravka o meroptiiatiiakh po usileniiu bor'by s banditizmom v Litovskoi SSR [Information on the escalation of actions against banditry in Lithuania]" (12 June 1945), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 440, l. 8

[54] Document No. 12.6 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 3, p. 230.

[55] Document No. 4.15 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, p. 100.

[56] Vardys, *The Catholic Church,* p. 71.

[57] Streikus, "The Resistance of the Church," p. 89. This is not a direct quotation of Sužiedelis but a Soviet agent's report about his attitude.

with the state, noted sarcastically: "No Bolshevik could have written something better"[58] and was soon arrested. Guerrillas, whom Stankevičus consistently called "bandits," threatened to kill him, but he believed, correctly, that the church could exist in the Soviet state only if it cooperated with the authorities, and the other church hierarchs reluctantly joined the dominant collaborating faction headed by Paltarokas, the only remaining Lithuanian bishop. Since the Vatican remained hostile, in July 1948, the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist party issued a directive entitled, "Tasks of the Party Organization Aimed at Revealing the Hostile Activities of the Reactionary Catholic Clergy," that called local party leaders to expose "the antipeople politics of the Catholic reactionaries in the past … , the nature of the reactionary Catholic clergy as an accomplice of German fascists, and as an inspirer and organizer of the bourgeois-nationalist bandit underground, and, at present, as an agent of international reaction."[59] This directive led to intensification of the repressions against the Catholic Church in Lithuania that continued until the end of Stalinism: 362 of the 1,116 Lithuanian priests were accused of anti-Soviet activities and arrested between 1944 and 1953.[60]

The Uniate Church also was affiliated with the Vatican, and unlike the Catholic Church, it had actively collaborated with the Germans. Most of its priests sympathized with the ideals of nationalist guerrillas, if not necessarily their methods, which made the Soviets perceive the Uniate Church, inaccurately, as a major agent of the resistance.[61] The Uniate Church was a bearer of the Ukrainian Galician simple identity, which the state sought to replace with the nested Soviet one. However, as long as the Soviet government was trying to establish relations with the Vatican, it was ready to put up with the Uniate Church. Sensing this, Sheptyts'kyi demonstrated once again a remarkable political flexibility and explicitly condemned UPA and OUN-B.[62] Khrushchev reported to Stalin that "Sheptyts'kyi took an openly expressed pro-Soviet position."[63] Bishops Iosif Slipyi and Hrygorii Khomyshin issued appeals in late 1944 in which they called UPA to "return from the wrong path."[64] Ivan Polianskii, an MGB colonel tasked with monitoring the Uniate Church, explained the considerations behind the initially lenient Soviet policy:

Taking into account the high prestige that Sheptyts'kyi enjoys among Catholics and Uniates in the West Ukrainian regions, the change of his [political] orientation

[58] Streikus, "The Resistance of the Church," pp. 89, 90.

[59] Document No. 12.6 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 3, p. 230.

[60] Document No. 12.11 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 3, pp. 249, 251, 252.

[61] Document No. 29 in V. Vasil'ev et al., eds., *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 97.

[62] Wiktor Poliszczuk, *Bitter Truth* (Toronto, Canada: Wiktor Poliszczuk, 1999), pp. 309–311.

[63] Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State* (Edmonton, Canada: CIUS, 1996), p. 81.

[64] Ivan Bilas, *Repesyvno-karal'na systema v Ukraini 1917–1953,* Vol. 1 (Kyiv: Lybid', 1994), p. 309; Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,* pp. 78, 85.

from pro-German to pro-Soviet and the possibility of using him for undermining anti-Soviet nationalist organizations, the Council [for Religious Affairs] believes that it would be expedient to satisfy … the requests of the Uniate Church [for a benevolent attitude from the Soviet state] in order to preserve Sheptyts'kyi's current orientation.[65]

When Andrei Sheptyts'kyi died in November 1944, Iosif Slipyi was elected the next Primate of the Uniate Church. In December 1944, he sent a delegation headed by Archimandrite Klymentii Sheptyts'kyi, Anrdei's brother, to Moscow to assure the Soviet government of the Uniate Church's loyalty and prevent the anticipated retaliation for its collaboration with the Germans. Polianskii told the delegation the government's attitude toward the church would depend on its position toward the war on the Eastern Front and, in particular, toward UPA. He said: "The Uniate Church should take certain steps in order to rescue these deceived people and guide them in the right direction. … Here, the interests of the state and the Church coincide."[66] Polianskii hinted that the effectiveness of the church's effort to undermine UPA resistance and persuade insurgents to accept amnesty would define relations between the church and the Soviet state.[67]

In late 1944, the Soviet leaders treated the Uniate Church as equal to other non-Orthodox churches. However, by the spring of 1945, the government's attitude changed. The Uniate hierarchy did attempt to terminate the civil war in western Ukraine by calling for peace and forgiveness, but it never condemned UPA in language as strong as that used by the Russian Orthodox Church to condemn German collaborators despite intense pressure by the government to do so, and many parish priests remained sympathetic to the resistance. Ukrainian party leaders were disappointed with the rather modest contribution of the Uniate hierarchy to pacification. The reemergence of an anti-Vatican trend in the Soviet policy meant a death sentence to the Uniate Church. The affiliation of the church with the hostile Vatican was as important a factor in defining Soviet decision making as was the collaboration with the enemy and the support of the resistance by some Uniate priests against the orders of their superiors.

The Soviets understood that they had to put up with Catholicism in Lithuania and Latvia, but they thought they could get rid of the Uniate Church, a hybrid of Orthodoxy and Catholicism, and extend the authority of the obedient Orthodox Church over the rebellious West Ukrainian regions. In March 1945, Stalin signed a directive outlining the measures necessary to incorporate the Uniate Church into the Russian Orthodox Church. In April and May 1945, the police decapitated the church by arresting Slipyi, five Uniate bishops, and several other prominent clerics who refused to consider

[65] M. I. Otdel'skii, *Svoboda sovesti v Rossii: istoricheskii i sovremennyi aspecty* 2, 2005; www.rusoir.ru/print/04/32/index.html.

[66] Otdel'skii, *Svoboda sovesti v Rossii*.

[67] Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,* p. 94.

conversion to Orthodoxy.[68] The government organized "an initiative group," led by Havryil Kostel'nyk, that sought to incorporate the Uniate Church into the Russian Orthodox Church. Kostel'nyk, pastor of the largest cathedral in Lvov, Galicia's largest city, was a wise choice. He headed the "Easternizer" faction within the Uniate Church, which sought to purge it of Latin-rite borrowings.[69] Kostel'nyk hated OUN because, he explained, "Nationalism had orphaned me and my wife – [it] killed our three sons [who died in the ranks of the SS *Galizien* division and UPA]. … In our land, there is no family that will not be lamenting some victim of nationalism."[70] He enjoyed much prestige, and some other priests followed him, helped by the pressure of the government that arrested stubborn Uniate priests who refused to convert or forced them to switch to secular occupations.

Khrushchev accurately outlined the Soviet considerations behind the anti-Uniate campaign:

> We have to support the initiative group pursuing conversion to Orthodoxy. … I don't mean that you have to give speeches calling everyone to convert from the Uniate religion to Orthodoxy because the latter is a good faith. … We have to choose the lesser of two evils. Conversion of the Uniates to Orthodoxy benefits us. This policy aims to sever [them] from Rome and affiliate [them] with the Orthodox Church.[71]

The government recognized the "initiative group" as a temporary administrative body of the Uniate Church. The Russian Orthodox hierarchs contributed to the government pressure calling on the Uniates to "cut ties with the Vatican that leads you into darkness and spiritual death."[72] In January 1945, the Orthodox Church for the first time referred to the Vatican as the enemy.[73] The Council for Religious Affairs, an agency established as a coordinating body between the state and the various religious denominations, noted that the Orthodox Church "made a serious effort to liquidate the Greek-Catholic (Uniate) Church in the West Ukrainian provinces."[74]

After the arrest of the Uniate hierarchy, conversion to Orthodoxy proceeded rapidly. By August 1945, 255 of the 1,997 Uniate priests had joined the "initiative group"; 800 had joined by October, although Kostel'nyk thought fewer than 50 had joined out of conviction, whereas the rest converted under duress.[75] The ruthless government pressure continued, and by 1946, 70 percent of the Uniate priests had succumbed to it.[76] The Soviet leaders believed the

[68] Chumachenko, *Gosudarstvo, Pravoslavnaia tserkov', veruiushchie,* p. 52.
[69] Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,* p. 25.
[70] Ibid., p. 122.
[71] "Stenogramma rechi tov. Khrushcheva [Transcript of Comrade Khrushchev's speech]" (16 July 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2412, ll. 12, 13.
[72] Otdel'skii, *Svoboda sovesti v Rossii.*
[73] Vasil'eva, "*Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov'*," p. 31.
[74] Ibid., p. 20.
[75] Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,* pp. 137, 144; Vasil'eva, "*Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov'*," p. 20.
[76] Otdel'skii, *Svoboda sovesti v Rossii.*

conversion to be a stunning success. The final blow to the Uniate Church came on 8 March 1946 when a council (*sobor*) of the Uniate hierarchy gathered in Lvov. It accused the Vatican of shielding Germany from responsibility for war crimes and decided to "abrogate the Unia, separate from the Vatican, and turn to the Holy Orthodox Faith of our forefathers."[77] The government continued arresting priests who refused to convert, accusing them of participation in the resistance and collaboration with the Germans. In 1945–1950, 344 Uniate priests were sentenced, typically to 10 years of prison, and several died during investigation.[78] No doubt some of them had collaborated with the Germans, some had participated in the resistance, and many more were sympathetic to OUN's goals. A high-ranking Uniate cleric writing under the pseudonym Father Ikona, probably Bishop Mykhail Mel'nyk, assured UPA: "Your ideology agrees with ours. Every priest would gladly welcome the realization of your dreams."[79] However, it is hard to judge how many of the sentenced Uniate priests were collaborators or resistance members because even those who were mostly engaged indirectly by delivering pro-German or nationalist sermons. The police obviously arrested them in the context of the conversion campaign, and their refusal to convert probably was more important in the police decision making than were any alleged anti-Soviet activities.

The Soviet regime issued no formal death sentences to stubborn priests, preferring to exile them. However, it did murder at least one Uniate archbishop. According to MGB General Pavel Sudoplatov, Khrushchev requested Stalin's permission to kill Teodor Romzha, Archbishop of Uzhgorod, claiming baselessly that he supported UPA, and Stalin ordered his assassination. In October 1947, MGB arranged a "car accident" that injured Romzha. He then was taken to a hospital where a nurse, an MGB agent, killed him with an injection of curare.[80]

Like other West Ukrainians, priests found themselves in the crossfire between the state and the resistance. Like the Soviet police, OUN also recruited priests as informers under duress and forced them to sign the warning, "If I violate this promise, … I will be killed along with my family."[81] When the Soviets began converting the Uniates, OUN explained its attitude toward this campaign: "As a political organization, we ignore the difference between the Orthodox and the Uniate churches. However, we are against the conversion to Orthodoxy because Moscow and the NKVD want to undermine the Uniate clergy [and] the Ukrainian nation."[82] OUN believed correctly that the conversion would help the Soviet state to erase the Galician Ukrainian identity,

[77] Document No. 246 in V. Malanchuk et al., eds., *Pravda pro Uniiu. Dokumenty i materially* (L'viv: Kameniar, 1968), p. 365.
[78] Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,* p. 245.
[79] Ibid., p. 188.
[80] Pavel Sudoplatov, *Spetsoperatsii* (Moscow: Olma-Press, 1999), pp. 413, 414.
[81] "Raspiska [Statement]" (6 August 1943), TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 361, l. 8.
[82] OUN (18 September 1945), TsHADOU, f. 1, d. 23, op. 1695, l. 277.

and it sought to stop this process. In July 1946, OUN issued an ultimatum to the converted priests, prompting them to repudiate publicly their defection or suffer "executive measures." An OUN assassin shot Kostel'nyk dead on 20 September 1948.[83] Dozens of priests suffered the same fate. OUN claimed the police had armed the converts and connected their homes to district police stations by a telephone line and that all Uniate priests who had preserved their positions despite their refusal to convert also were police agents.[84] Subsequently, UPA attacked both converts and those who resisted state pressure. OUN killed over 30 priests in the Lvov Diocese alone.[85] As in the case of Soviet repressions targeting the clergy, it is unknown whether OUN's victims were guilty of the deeds attributed to them. OUN assassinated more priests than the Soviets did during the conversion campaign, although the balance is likely to be reversed if the number of those who died in Soviet jails and labor camps in the following years is taken into account.

The elimination of the Uniate Church was a step within the framework of the general Soviet drive toward centralization and turning the church into a servant of the state, the status it had held since the reign of Peter the Great. The impact of the conversion on the security situation in western Ukraine is hard to measure. The Orthodox Church extended its authority over the entire western Ukraine, and its clergy had to follow the orders of the pro-Soviet hierarchy. The Soviet leaders believed it was a rational step in the long run, although they knew it would have a negative impact on relations with the Galician public in the short run. The repressions against the Uniates were disastrously unpopular. According to Academy of Sciences member Shchurai, it was "impossible to find a single person who would approve the Soviet regime after the arrests of the clergy in Galicia. … What did they attain by arresting Slipyi, [the Bishop] Budka and others? Nothing, except killing good will even among those who had had it."[86] The Soviet leaders understood that repressions stirred resistance, but they believed that the replacement of the Uniate priests with converts and Orthodox loyalists transferred from the east would make a positive impact within a few years. They ignored the fact that church influence is based on its prestige. "No irreplaceable people exist," stated a Stalinist maxim that repeatedly proved itself faulty but was nonetheless consistently followed. The reputations of the priests who converted were shattered, whereas respect for the Orthodox newcomers among the West Ukrainian public was low from the start, and their calls to stop resisting and submit to the authorities carried little weight.

The members of small Protestant religious groups who refused to accept the role of state servants suffered even more than the Uniates did. The government viewed these sects as alien cults and agents of the West, especially with

[83] Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi,* p. 348.
[84] Intercepted OUN Report (March 1947), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 2, d. 121, l. 108.
[85] Bilas, *Repesyvno-karal'na systema,* Vol. 1, p. 332.
[86] "Hreko-katolits'ka tserkva v 1944–1991 rr." *UIZh* 4:105, 1996.

the beginning of the Cold War; their fervent missionary activity increased this suspicion, whereas the refusal to serve in the army put them outside Soviet law. Although no evidence of their resistance to the Soviet state was ever found, the Soviet leaders believed that "American imperialism attacked human souls under the disguise of the Baptist and the Evangelical sects."[87] Since the state could not incorporate them into the major religions traditionally existing in the Soviet Union, it preferred to exile their congregations. In April 1951, it deported several thousand Jehovah's Witnesses, Adventists, and members of other small protestant groups from all western regions to Siberia,[88] thus finally subordinating all the borderland churches to the state.

Conclusion

The use of the church as a pacification tool after reoccupation of the borderlands was new to the Soviet state: Ideological constraints had not allowed earlier Bolsheviks to engage the clergy against peasant rebellions during the civil war. Paradoxically, the increasing totalitarian tendency within the Soviet system, presuming that every cluster of society had to be penetrated by the state and work for its benefit, made the Soviet leaders reconsider their previous single-minded repressive policy toward the church and stop short of "liquidation of the clergy as a class," which is what they did to *kulaks*. Instead, they downplayed their atheist ideology and hinted to clerics that the symbiosis of the state and the church could be mutually profitable if the church followed state orders. In the words of Harvey Fireside, during and after World War II, the Soviet leaders "managed to achieve a comprehensive accord with the church of their land, granting it official status, coordinating its effort with the government's wartime and later foreign policies." The status of the Russian Orthodox Church changed in the course of the war "from probationary servant to junior partner of the state."[89] When Stalin gave the church the opportunity to expand its personnel after the "concordat," its hierarchy, weary of interwar repressions and riddled by police agents, ensured that the numerous newcomers were loyal to the state. The patriotic surge affected the clergy no less than other Soviet people in the old territories. This helped the hierarchs recruit those who accepted the role of state servants despite their distaste of Communist ideology, and most of them promoted the government's agenda. The Russian Orthodox Church cooperated with the state not only because it was ordered to but also because it sought, with the government's help, to expand its authority at the expense of its rivals. The Orthodox Church enjoyed spiritual domination over western Belorussia, a large part of western Ukraine, and the Slavic-populated areas of the Baltic region. It helped the government advance its policies by spreading pro-Soviet propaganda, endorsing the army

[87] Vasyl' Begma, *Shliakhi neskorenykh* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1965), p. 278.
[88] Aleksandr Iakovlev, ed., *Stalinskie deportatsii* (Moscow: Materik, 2005), pp. 625, 626.
[89] Fireside, *Icon and Swastika,* pp. 52, 167.

draft, lumping together nationalist guerrillas and German collaborators, and facilitating amnesties. In turn, the Soviet regime rewarded the Russian Orthodox Church for the services rendered: During the decade following the "concordat," the Orthodox Church rose from the ashes and acquired 74 bishops, 30,000 priests, 67 monasteries, and 10 schools of theology.[90]

The Soviet regime extended its post-1943 policy toward most other borderland churches. It demanded their unconditional subordination to the state and the purge of all clergy that refused to be its servant, but it also avoided violence against those who had agreed to fully collaborate. This new policy had both rational and irrational components. The perception of the non-Orthodox churches as agents of Western imperialism was enforced by the obvious enmity of many clerics, the participation of some in the resistance in violation of their hierarchs' orders, and the refusal of the Catholic and Uniate churches to cut ties with the hostile Vatican. This perception made the purges of borderland clergy far more comprehensive than was necessary to ensure the churches' cooperation, while the public resented any repressions against the church. However, those priests who remained after the purges followed orders and helped the state secure the compliance of many believers or at least alleviate their hostility. Most clerics among the hierarchy understood the futility of the resistance; they sincerely sought to terminate the civil war and thus save the lives of their countrymen; and the Soviet government showed an ideological flexibility and skill in exploiting the clergy's sentiments and concerns for pacification of the borderlands.

The Ukrainian Autocephalous and Uniate churches had most of their followers in disputed lands claimed by both Poland and the Soviet Union. The governments of both states regarded the actions of these churches during the German occupation as treason and prepared for retaliation. The Autocephalous Church died a natural death, whereas the Uniate Church showed no inclination to collaborate with the Soviets enthusiastically enough to secure their benevolence. This, with the increasing tendency of the Soviet state toward centralization, doomed the Uniates. It is clear in retrospect that conversion was unnecessary and probably counterproductive in the short run; the Soviet state could have molded this church in the same fashion as it had the others. However, in 1945–1946, geopolitical considerations about separatism – the presence of a Catholic agency that had proven its hostility in lands that could be disputed by three Catholic states (Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary) – overweighed concerns about the negative impact on public opinion made by the elimination of the Uniate Church.

[90] Ibid., p. 166.

11

Violations of Official Policy and Their Impact on Pacification

> A warm heart, a cool mind and clean hands.
> – Vladimir Lenin about Felix Dzerzhinsky, head of the *Cheka* (Later Soviet propaganda referred to all secret policemen with this phrase)

The state often delegates extraordinary powers to local authorities in rebellious regions, hoping this will help them enforce its policy. These officials and police, however, do not completely identify with the government's agenda. They may abuse this power for their profit and be more coercive than the government intends, thereby frustrating the government's effort to balance force and reforms. Totalitarian states conduct pacification with less restraint than democracies because of indifference to civil rights, the low value placed on human life, the supremacy of decrees over law, the tendency to make ideologically motivated and ruthless decisions, and the elevated role of security agencies compared with civilian institutions. In this context, the illegal actions of police and administrators, amplifying the brutality of official policy, may be the last straw in shifting public sentiment in favor of the guerrillas. Random violence committed by representatives of the authorities "defeats deterrence because it destroys the possibility of anticipation of a forthcoming evil and hence the ability to avoid it; it erases the relationship between crime and punishment. … Its sheer unpredictability makes everyone fear lethal sanctions regardless of their behavior; innocence is irrelevant, and compliance is utterly impossible."[1] People may join the resistance not because they share its ideals but because they cannot stand the government's employees. The success of pacification depends on the willingness and ability of a state to curb its representatives' abuses.

Many authors give examples of crimes committed by the Soviet security agencies in the western borderlands, but nobody has tried to separate local practice from intended policy. The Soviet leaders endorsed some atrocities, but

[1] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 143.

others were committed by the security forces and local officials in violation of directives. It was all the same to the victims whether they were robbed or killed by government orders or because some "party levers" went astray, but scholars should pay attention to gaps between the official policy and its implementation so as to avoid sweeping generalizations about the Soviet regime and totalitarianism. The party ruled by decrees, ignoring the constitution; therefore, the term *illegal action* meant not a deed that broke the law but one that violated official policy. I will assess Soviet experience with such infringements on the party line in three steps. First, I will trace the escalation of random violence from the incorporation of the borderlands into the Soviet Union in 1939–1940 to the end of the war, analyzing its agents, scope, and causes and discussing whether certain types of violence fell into the Soviet definition of illegal actions. Second, I will examine the state's response to such crimes. Finally, I will explain why the government could not stop such actions for a long time. Senior party leaders and police commanders realized that pacification suffered immensely from arbitrary violence and the corruption of security forces and civil servants. Some of these crimes were an inevitable outcome of wartime brutalization and Soviet supply practice, yet many others could have been prevented had the government fought the abuses as systematically as it strengthened the combat discipline of the Red Army. However, its control over the borderlands was too lax to undertake such an effort, and the peculiarities of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the blurry boundaries of legality weakened it even further. Haphazard punishment of the perpetrators did little to prevent such crimes.

11.1 Escalation of Unauthorized Violence from the First to the Second Soviet Occupation

Farmers in the western borderlands had four encounters with Soviet authorities between 1939 and 1950: the occupation of 1939–1941, the raids of Red partisans during the German occupation, the advance of the Red Army in 1944, and the counterinsurgency campaign of 1944–1950. Each successive encounter brought an intensification of unsanctioned violence. During the occupation of 1939–1941, the government promoted its image as a liberator of toilers from the tyranny of capitalists, *kulaks,* and foreign diasporas. At that time, the Red Army was a fairly disciplined force, and soldiers believed in their liberation mission. The first Red Army unit that entered Ternopol freed all prisoners in the city jail, including OUN members, blew up the jail, and to the NKVD's dismay burned all Polish police files.[2] The army was well supplied, according to Soviet standards, and its garrisons were isolated from civilians. Some units still plundered "class enemies," but party officials made

[2] Document No. 37 in S. Stepashin et al., eds., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine*, Vol. 1, Book 1 (Moscow: Kniga i biznes, 1995), p. 89.

a serious effort to stop this and punish the guilty.[3] The NKVD, frightened by its purge of 1937–1939, followed instructions, if not the law. The radical social reforms provoked some abuses, yet most of these occurred because of pressure from below or as a result of overzealousness rather than the corruption of Soviet administrators.

The residents of the western borderlands met the Soviets next when the Red partisans raided their regions beginning with late 1942. By this time, all actors on the Eastern Front had become brutalized by bitter fighting in the context of racial war. Human life was cheap in their eyes. Vasilii Parkhachev, author of an exceptionally honest partisan memoir, mentions three cases of Soviet commanders threatening to execute their subordinates for the following: the failure of a reconnaissance party in winter to cross a wide lake that, contrary to expectations, was free of ice and no boats were available; failure of a partisan to share with his comrades several biscuits taken from a dead enemy soldier; and for losing radio batteries in battle.[4] People who could execute their own comrades for such minor offences were surely ruthless in dealing with those they perceived as enemies. In the borderlands, where living standards were higher and many people were hostile, some partisans regarded nearly everybody as an enemy. In the Baltic region, this trend was further aggravated by the cultural difference between the local population and Slavic-dominated partisan units and the ethnic tensions stemming from indiscriminate violence of Baltic collaborators in the Slavic lands. Partisan life was dangerous, fighters were hungry, and some believed that they should reward themselves for hard service by plundering numerous *kulaks,* whom local people would qualify merely as peasants of average prosperity. Like all guerrillas, the partisans lived off the land, and requisition frequently became robbery, which, along with crimes committed while drunk, was the most typical breach of discipline. Rape and murder occurred rarely.

Discipline varied greatly from unit to unit, depending on accessibility to inspectors from the center and the personalities of commanders and commissars with virtually unrestricted power. Kuzovkov, commissar of the Kamenets-Podolsk Partisan Brigade, urged his subordinates to distinguish between friend and foe:

> You should understand and explain to the personnel that Banderists are only a fraction of [the] West Ukrainian population, while other people support only some aspects of their policy and only because Bandera gendarmes and special punitive SB units

[3] Shupikov, inspector of the CC of the Belorussian Communist party, to Shamberg, "Informatsionnoe soobshchenie rabote TsK KP(b) Litovskoi SSR [Report about the activities of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (16 September 1940), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 4, l. 14; Document No. 16 in V. Vasil'ev et al., eds., *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 72.

[4] Vasilii Parkhachev, *Reidy besstrashnykh* (Syktyvkar: Komi knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1998), pp. 94–96, 147, 148.

intimidate and terrorise them. … Illegal actions of partisans against the local population of Western Ukraine can turn these vacillating people into staunch fanatics.[5]

In some partisan units, petty theft and drunkenness were punished with death. In the Kovpak Partisan Brigade, two men were executed for stealing a bucket of honey, a bucket of lard, and clothes from a peasant; so was a fighter who stole money from a local woman.[6] Other units turned into criminal gangs. The NKVD reported that the Belorussian partisans raided Latvia and engaged in "systematic plunder" far beyond "military necessity," stealing sewing machines, children clothes, china, and gramophones. These actions antagonized the Latvian population that was armed by the Germans, and they established a cordon along the Latvian border that partisans could not penetrate.[7] The guerrilla war at the Latvian-Belorussian border turned into an ethnic conflict, and random violence committed by partisans contributed to it.

The Central Partisan Headquarters outlined its official policy toward crimes against civilians: "Units that disgrace partisan honor will be brought across the front line and disbanded, and the guilty will be severely punished." NKGB sent commandos to arrest partisan leaders whose units "engaged in banditry, rapes, looting, murders and assaults against Soviet people."[8] However, the Central Partisan Headquarters had few means to control their men in the distant western provinces. If a partisan unit was the only one operating in a remote area and fought well, the headquarters valued valor over virtue and ignored policy violations as long as they remained within limits. "Svetailov," commander of a partisan band that pulled gold teeth from the residents of the Ukrainian town of Gorodnitse, preserved his position even after headquarters heard about this fact.[9] Incidents of random partisan violence in the borderlands were more frequent than they were in the old territories, and information about them spread quickly among local residents. While in the pre-1939 regions a sympathetic population considered such incidents to be the isolated actions of black sheep, borderland people regarded them as typical of the partisans, and many joined the nationalist guerrillas or the auxiliary police to defend their lives and property. To be fair, the reputations of the AK,

[5] Document No. 28 in Volodymyr Serhiichuk, ed., *Radians'ki partyzany proty OUN-UPA* (Kyiv: Ukrains'ka vydavnycha spilka, 1999), pp. 54, 55.

[6] John A. Armstrong, ed., *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), p. 749; Document No. 109 in Serhiichuk, *Radians'ki partyzany proty OUN-UPA*, p. 157.

[7] Sudoplatov to Ponomarenko (19 January 1943), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 748, l. 23; Prudnikov, commander of an NKVD commando unit, to Sudoplatov (25 April 1943), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 748, ll. 80–83; Bogdan Kobulov, deputy people's commissar of state security, to Ponomarenko (13 July 1943), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 748, l. 104.

[8] Ponomarenko's note on Novyi's letter (13 October 1942), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 747, ll. 48, 49; Bel'chenko, deputy head of Partisan Central HQ, to Kalinin (24 November 1943), RGASPI, f. 69, op. 1, d. 180, l. 60.

[9] Document No. 73 in P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 4 (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003), p. 187.

UPA, and LLA also suffered from unauthorized violence committed by their fighters against civilians, and they also made an effort to curb it by drastic measures.[10]

In the summer of 1944, the Red Army reentered the western borderlands. It differed from the army that had occupied these regions in 1939–1941 in its composition, supply practice, morale, and sentiments. Its soldiers had lived for years on the dream of taking revenge on the enemy's land, which the hostility they met in the western provinces suggested they had reached. A wounded bomber pilot traveling through Latvia said:

> If I were flying my aircraft now, I … would have bombed every homestead, every house in Latvia, because *Aizsargi* members live everywhere here. Latvians are German collaborators; they are traitors. Look at Pskov Province [Russia] – all villages were burned down, while here all homesteads are unscathed, cattle have survived and every household has five or seven cows. Why? Because all Latvians supported the Germans, and the Germans did not touch them.[11]

This accumulated hatred toward "collaborators" hastened the erosion of moral values under the impact of the bitter fight. Casualties were heavy on the Eastern Front, and soldiers hurried to enjoy life while they could. The culture of heavy drinking, widespread in Russia since imperial times, was spurred on during the war, when every frontline soldier received 100 grams of vodka daily,[12] and many supplemented the official ration with whatever alcohol they could find. A foreign observer commented: "So long as he [the Soviet soldier] is sober, one has almost nothing to fear. Only under the influence of alcohol and also when several are drunk together do the excesses begin."[13] No other army in World War II matched the Red Army in the number or proportion of crimes committed while drunk. The threat of punishment seemed empty to those who had been struggling through Armageddon for years, and especially to the million of amnestied criminals brought from GULAG camps and enlisted in the Red Army.[14] The rotated units could not relax between front tours, as did their Western counterparts. Withdrawn to the rear after fighting that exceeded everything experienced by soldiers in the West, they could not visit their families even if they survived the German occupation but had to stay in the barracks, where they

[10] Jeffrey Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura* (Moscow: Sovremennaia Istoriia, 2006), pp. 31–33; Document No. 47 in N. I . Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008), p. 175.

[11] Podchasova, lecturer of the CC of the Latvian Communist party, to Janis Kalnberziņš, "Dokladnaia Zapiska [Report]" (Spring 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 10, ll. 116, 117.

[12] Document No. 58 in V. A. Zolotarev, ed. *Russkii arkhiv. Velikaia Otechestvennaia,* Vol. 2 (Moscow: Terra, 1997), p. 73.

[13] Norman Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 113.

[14] Document No. 97 in A. Kokurin and N. Petrov, eds., *GULAG (1918–1960)* (Moscow: Materik, 2000), p. 428.

had no fun and received food rations much smaller than on the front. No brothels existed in the Soviet Union, and soldiers had no money to hire prostitutes or even to buy vodka – they could only extort it or acquire it on the black market in exchange for the booty they had taken elsewhere. While Soviet soldiers respected civilians in their own country as well as members of friendly nations, such as Czechs and Slovaks, in hostile regions they felt themselves conquerors rather than liberators. Many perceived violence against civilians in such regions as the privilege of victors whose lives had been ruined by the invader supported, they thought, by those civilians. This attitude produced barbaric orgies. NKVD General Ivan Tkachenko reported from Lithuania: "Many officers, sergeants and privates routinely drink, plunder and kill citizens; rob apartments; behave outrageously; and violate revolutionary legality en masse almost everywhere. … The residents of towns and villages are afraid of drunk soldiers no less than bandits. Such behavior of the soldiers enrages the people … and feeds counterrevolutionary propaganda."[15] Grigorii Pomerants, a Soviet soldier, attempted to analyze the sentiments of his comrades:

> I don't know what triggered the pogroms at the end of the war. Perhaps a nervous breakdown after the tragic role? The anarchic spirit of the nation? Military propaganda? … Avenge! You are a soldier-avenger! … Kill the German, and then jump the German woman! This is how a soldier celebrates victory! … The [Russian] soul has always been split between the ideals of the Virgin Mary and those of Sodom. The Russian is courageous in battle. He celebrates [victory] by making pogroms.[16]

This mentality emerged not when the Red Army reached Germany but after it moved beyond the old Soviet frontiers into the hostile borderlands. "The violations of socialist legality" committed by Soviet forces in the western regions fall into three distinctive, although overlapping, categories: common crimes, such as plunder, rape, and arbitrary violence stemming from alcohol abuse; crimes perpetrated during counterinsurgency missions; and harassment by local administrators.

11.2 Common Crimes

Plunder by advancing Soviet military units was inevitable. The Red Army's deep operations of 1944, combined with a weak and poorly mechanized tail, led to sanctioned and unauthorized requisitions of food, fodder, or any other supplies. The Lithuanian guerrilla commander Juozas "Daumantas" (Lukša) observed that Soviet officers punished their men for theft, but "no

[15] General Tkachenko, plenipotentiary of NKVD-NKGB in Lithuania, to Beria, "Dokladnaia zapiska o prestupleniiakh voennosluzhashchikh Pribaltiiskogo VO [Report on the crimes committed by soldiers of the Baltic Military District]" (1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 104, ll. 27–32.

[16] Grigorii Pomerants, *Zapiski gadkogo utenka* (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1998), pp. 142, 207, 208.

amount of punishment could fill their bellies."[17] Once chaotic requisitions became the norm, soldiers started to loot for themselves. In the western borderlands, where living standards were higher and many people were hostile, soldiers believed that they could undertake "dekulakization" on their own. A Soviet prosecutor wrote: "Commanders and soldiers behave in the Transcarpathian Ukraine disgracefully, provoking the widespread discontent of the population." A cavalry corps moving through this region robbed 197 homes, taking 26 centners of corn, blankets, pillows, male and female underwear, 4,000 rubles, 55 sheep, and 66 chickens. The prosecutor explained "the mass exodus of intelligentsia and peasants from Transcarpathian Ukraine to Czechoslovakia" by "the outrageous conduct of some officers and local functionaries, and the violation of citizens' rights of property and personal inviolability."[18] In the Baltic region, the behavior of Soviet soldiers contrasted with that of Germans, who abstained from looting until the last days of their evacuation. Antanas Sniečkus, first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist party, told Soviet generals: "As long as the Soviet soldiers and the Military Council of the [Baltic] Front treat us [Lithuanians] as German fascists and rob, we will be outraged and … will lose the remnants of sympathy with the Red Army."[19]

It was much easier to control regulars than partisans, and as a foreign observer noted, "A great number of highly educated and cultivated Russian officers were terribly ashamed of the behavior of their compatriots."[20] Yet even more officers shared their men's sentiments. They had no pity for "collaborators" and often helped soldiers escape court-martial or freed them when arrested. The Great Terror and the attrition of 1941–1944 led to a "plebeization" of the officer corps. When the Red Army reached the western territories, many of its officers were former privates who had been hastily promoted. They lacked the caste mentality that entailed a moral code or notions of "officer's honor." Their discipline barely differed from that of the soldiers, and many engaged in similar crimes. Captain V. Titorenko "organized a robber gang with four soldiers. From July to the day of their arrest [13 September 1945], this gang perpetrated numerous robberies of civilians in Riga and neighboring homesteads and stole valuables and other property worth a total of 100,000 rubles." Dozens of other officers were arrested for similar crimes in the western regions.[21]

[17] Juozas Daumantas, *Fighters for Freedom: Lithuanian Partisans versus the USSR (1944–1947)* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1975), p. 11.

[18] Head Prosecutor Office of Transcarpathian Ukraine to A. Romanov (1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2370, ll. 37, 38; Riasnoi, people's commissar of internal affairs of Ukraine, to Beria (9 October 1945), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 104, l. 13.

[19] Beria to Stalin (24 July 1944), GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 66, l. 27.

[20] Naimark, *The Russians in Germany*, p. 85.

[21] Khannikov to Riazanov, "Spravka o merakh bor'by organov kontrrazvedki SMERSh s maroderstvom [Report on the struggle of SMERSh against looting]" (20 December 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 4, ll. 168, 169.

The authorities could not prevent hungry and poor Soviet soldiers from plundering the local population. However, they could have done much more to prevent grave crimes such as rape. Their failure to do so resulted in a pandemic spread of sexual violence all across the borderlands. Women of all ages became victims of Soviet rowdies. One of many similar police reports from western Ukraine states:

> Sergeant … Grigorii Stol'nikov came to the house of I. V. Gorinskii in Stradch Village, Ivano-Frankovsk District, Lvov Province, and finding no adults at home, raped Gorinskii's five-year-old daughter. … Stol'nikov has been arrested. … An unidentified soldier of the 4th Guards Regiment raped Sh. K. Pesh, a 60-year-old woman, in Iabluniv Village.[22]

Scholars of violence have observed that "the conquest of females complements or, in some cases, substitutes for defeat of an enemy."[23] Soldiers of all armies raped women in enemy territory, but the Red Army was particularly notorious for this type of crime because of the specific conditions of service and also because it had much more to avenge than its Western Allies. Many Soviet soldiers perceived anyone living in generally hostile regions as a legitimate target for violence, if not murder, regardless of the personal sentiments of the local people. Stalin himself saw nothing wrong if "a soldier who has crossed thousands of kilometers through blood and fire and death has fun with a woman or takes some trifle."[24]

The Soviet General Headquarters never called for revenge against the borderland people and always maintained that the Red Army had come to liberate them. It was the party leaders embedded in military councils who were supposed to maintain the soldiers' morale. Many of them did attempt to enforce correct behavior toward civilians. In fact, the Red Army often punished its soldiers for arbitrary violence and did so more severely than other armies for the same crimes. Thousands were sent to penal companies and hundreds shot in front of their units to serve as a lesson to others. Pomerants, for example, was forced to watch the execution of a soldier for the theft of a horse in a Polish village.[25] No other army would have sentenced its soldier to death for such a crime. However, the prosecution of criminals remained haphazard and depended on the personality of the unit commander. The Red Army upheld combat discipline by methodically coupling draconian measures and political indoctrination. It undertook no similar systematic effort to prevent violence against hostile civilians.

The Red Army quickly rolled past the western borderlands, but the NKVD divisions and police stayed there permanently. The security units, engaged against internal enemies, were expected to have stricter discipline than the

[22] Document No. 62 in N. S. Khrushchev, *Vremia, liudi, vlast'*, Vol. 1 (Moscow: Moskovskie novosti, 1999), p. 825.
[23] Naimark, *The Russians in Germany*, p. 70.
[24] Ibid., p. 71.
[25] Pomerants, *Zapiski gadkogo utenka*, pp. 189, 202.

army. Raised from the most reliable recruits, they were supposed to be trained for unconventional warfare and understand the political repercussions of indiscriminate violence. Although they shared the revenge sentiments of the frontline soldiers, they never suffered comparable hardships and had lesser incentive to relieve battle fatigue in wild orgies, nor did they receive vodka rations. However, the "rear rats," as the frontline soldiers called the NKVD troops, committed proportionately more crimes than the Red Army. They operated in small units away from their superiors, making discipline harder to maintain and cover-up easier. They had more time to engage in private affairs than did regular soldiers and more opportunities because they had more contact with the local population. They had participated in the deportations of ethnic groups in 1941–1944 and were accustomed to endorsed violence against and unsanctioned plunder of Soviet citizens. Their moral standards were below those of the Red Army.

The major agent of random violence was, however, the district police. Soviet administration in the countryside rested on local strongmen used to the idea that "power grows out of the barrel of a gun."[26] They ignored legal formalities and did not comprehend that violence begets violence. The district police officer, one per several villages, aided by only a section of local militia, often unreliable, was a major target of guerrillas. Always on the alert with weapons in hand, facing sure death if caught by the insurgents, many such policemen believed they should reward themselves for their service in any way they could; many committed armed robberies, and some even murdered people to rob them.[27] The district police were the primary protector of the rural authorities and a major menace to law and order. V. Maksimavičius, first secretary of the Lithuanian Kretinga Province, assessed the actions of district policemen as "worse than banditry."[28] The VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania described the police crimes in just two small regions:

> Police and administrators engage in numerous and outrageous violations of socialist legality in Šakiai and Alytus provinces: illegal searches and confiscations of property and food from the population, assaults and arbitrary violence. The inspection revealed 26 crimes in Alytus Province. … Zhuravlev, head of the District NKVD Section, and his subordinates illegally confiscated food and personal belongings of 16 peasants and either appropriated or wasted all the confiscated property. … Police officer Gruzinskas and policeman Arcekauskas from Alytus Province executed Tumašiunas, whom they detained groundlessly, suspecting him of banditry, and appropriated 1,500 rubles stolen from him. … Twenty-eight crimes were recorded in Šakiai Province. … In June [1945], police officer Strakhov from the Provincial NKGB Section made illegal arrests and routinely robbed people. He groundlessly suspected *seredniak* Juoza Gudaitis of banditry and attempted to shoot him, but his submachine gun jammed

[26] Mao Tse-Tung, "Problems of War and Strategy," in *Selected Works,* Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1954), p. 272.

[27] Document No. 54 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* p. 264.

[28] Document No. 1.60 in Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m,* Vol. 1 (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003), p. 259.

and Gudaitis fled. Then Strakhov … confiscated all his property without compiling a list. The investigation revealed that Gudaitis had nothing to do with the bandits, and Strakhov was ordered to return all his [Gudaitis'] property, but he failed to return 36 items. On 17 June, Strakhov arrested Kuprišauskas and illegally confiscated 20 kilograms of bacon and a raincoat. On 1 May, Strakhov arrested S. Ju. Bobrežas, director of the timber company, and beat him up. Strakhov released Bobrežas three days later but appropriated [from him] 60 kilograms of sugar, 8 kilograms of candies, 4 kilograms of butter, 15 meters of wool cloth, 400 match boxes, 28 liters of vodka and 1,400 rubles. … Antonas Moskaliunas from Voiniuny village claims that … a policeman, Razdeliavičius, demanded that his [Moskaliunas'] wife buy him cigarettes or he would burn their house down.[29]

I. Murmilov, a policeman who served in Latvia for just three months, collected 10 suitcases of loot robbed from peasants, including a silk dress, a raincoat, a fishnet, soap, and numerous clocks and watches; he also beat up four men during interrogation and two men and four women while drunk, one of whom he raped, threatening her with a weapon.[30]

Policemen were poorer than most of those they pacified, and they preyed on wealthier farmers who fit their notion of *kulak*. While the government never legitimized robbery of *kulaks* by civil servants or police officers, its ideology and policy toward the *kulaks* suggested that the regime representatives could get away with plundering those labeled "class enemies." Soviet strategy presumed that the property of wealthy families could be alienated only during agrarian reform by court order or if they were deported; then it had to be distributed among the poor, thus fueling class struggle. In practice, Soviet officials and police routinely stole property from the deportees and also from prosperous peasants not liable to deportation and kept it. Of all cattle confiscated from Lithuanian "class enemies" from February to July 1946, 73.3 percent were distributed among local activists and police officers. Reports from Ukraine paint a similar picture.[31]

If provincial administrators heard about the robbery of "class enemies" by district authorities, they usually reprimanded their subordinates and ordered the return of the goods. They rarely launched criminal investigations, which encouraged the practice to continue. Having become emboldened by impunity

[29] VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania, "O narusheniiakh sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti v Šakiaiskom and Alitusskom uezdakh [Violation of socialist legality in the Šakiai and Alytus provinces]" (August 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 160–167.

[30] Document No. 138 in Elmars Pelakus, ed. *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia* (Riga: Nordik, 1999), pp. 284, 285.

[31] "Spravka o nekotorykh sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh izmeneniiakh v krestianskikh khoziaistvakh Litovskoi SSR [Information about some socioeconomic changes among Lithuanian farmer households]" (August 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 27, l. 23; Rusakov, plenipotentiary of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]" (9 March 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, ll. 108, 109; Fedoritenko, secretary of the Personnel Office of the Volyn' Provincial Party Committee, to Drozdov (18 August 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2408, l. 48; Document No. 146 in Pelakus, *Policy of Occupation Powers in Latvia,* p. 305.

in plundering "class enemies," policemen and district administrators often robbed peasants indiscriminately. Plunder became so habitual among security forces that it frustrated their work. Strokach observed that "soldiers stop pursuit [of UPA units], being busy with plunder, and bands escape intact."[32]

Drunk policemen committed proportionately far more rapes and murders than regular soldiers. In October 1944, Piatras Kaminskas, a Lithuanian police officer, while drunk,

> beat up Barškiavičius, fired several shots in his house, and then, threatening him with a weapon, raped his wife. In November 1944, he beat up Subač. In January 1945, he attempted to rape Davičene. … In the same month, he broke the door of Balsiavičene's apartment and demanded vodka, threatening her with a weapon. In February 1945, he … attempted to rape Mačulite, tore up her dress and underwear and, when the rape attempt failed, urinated on the floor and fell asleep in Mačulite's bed.[33]

Kaminskas was sentenced to eight years in jail after he had committed vicious crimes with impunity for half a year. Many other police rapists evaded justice for a long time. Rape of female prisoners was routine. A deputy prosecutor of Lvov Province wrote that police officer Matiukhin "sadistically humiliated" detained women, raping at least five of them, all arrested without warrant and later released as innocent. The habit resulted in a high rate of venereal disease among district police.[34] Policemen killed dozens of women who resisted rape. The prosecutor of Khust, a town in western Ukraine, wrote that rapes were so common that women were afraid to stay in their homes alone.[35]

Strokach believed that "drunkenness is the major evil that provokes all sorts of offenses,"[36] many of them senseless but grave. Dangerous service caused moral breakdowns among district policemen, who drowned their anxiety in liquor. Some of them distilled moonshine themselves,[37] but most extorted it from peasants, occasionally killing them in the process:

> On 7 April 1945, Senior Lieutenant Akimov, head of the BB Section of the Kolesovskii NKVD, … got drunk after a meeting where the Declaration of the Ukrainian Government about fighting against banditry was discussed. He visited [60-year-old] Zinevich and

[32] Konstantinovich, military prosecutor of NKVD Troops, "Spravka o narusheniiakh sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti rabotnikami organov NKVD [Report on the violations of socialist legality by NKVD officers]" (1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2436, l. 88; Timofei Strokach, deputy people's commissar of the Ukrainian NKVD, "Vsem komandiram chastei vnutrennikh voisk [To all commaders of security troops]" (12 January 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 144, l. 6.

[33] Grimovich, military prosecutor of NKVD troops in Lithuania, "Kratkii obzor sudimosti rabotnikov militsii Litovskoi SSR [Overview of the prosecution of policemen in Lithuania]" (10 August 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 18, l. 70.

[34] Document No. 23 in Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998), pp. 474, 475.

[35] Regional Prosecutor Gorgat to military prosecutor (1 October 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2370, l. 48; d. 2410, ll. 82, 113, 250; d. 2415, l. 17.

[36] Document No. 132 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 4, p. 429.

[37] Document No. 13 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 6, p. 106.

demanded moonshine, threatening to deport her to Siberia. When Zinevich stepped out to acquire moonshine, Akimov entered the barn and shot a piglet with his revolver. Being frightened by the shot, Zinevich ran away. Akimov … ordered a machine-gunner [from his team] to shoot her, and Zinevich was gravely wounded. Akimov came to her, shot her dead and ordered the machine-gunner to strip her body naked and leave it in the village street.[38]

It is easy to imagine what residents of this and neighboring villages thought about the Declaration of the Ukrainian Government after this incident. Akimov was sentenced to 10 years in a labor camp, but many similar crimes remained unpunished. Hundreds or thousands of peasants fell victim to random violence by drunken police. Routine patrols sometimes became grisly pogroms. A section of NKVD troops with mostly Ukrainian soldiers was sent to check out the Ukrainian village of Rodarychi:

Before going on the mission, [Lieutenant] Iliubaev, [Sergeant] Rezin and private Saiko drank a liter of moonshine. … Having searched the house of Kutovik and found nothing suspicious, Iliubaev and his section walked to the neighboring house, that of Maria Fedorovna Kul'chitskaia. … At that time, Anna Kutovik ran out of her house toward the village council, shouting that she had been robbed. … Private Saiko beat her up with a submachine gun and then shot her dead in the street. On hearing the shots, a local resident, 50-year-old Stanislav Ivanovich Tovbukh, ran out of his house. … Saiko took Tovbukh 100 meters away and shot him. … After that, Iluibaev ordered that everyone in the [Kul'chitskaia's] house be shot. … Saiko, Soloviev and Khalitov lined up 21-year-old Emilia Kul'chitskaia, 13-year-old Ekaterina Kul'chitskaia, and a disabled man, 36-year-old Ivan Priima, into a single row by the bed. The teenager wept and begged them not to kill her, while the disabled Priima fell to his knees and asked them to spare him. But Saiko, Solov'ev and Khalitov shot the girls dead, while Priima feigned death and thus survived. … Iliubaev reported to the Battalion commander, Captain Shtefanov, that he had liquidated five bandits.[39]

The whole section was arrested, but the document does not say what penalty its soldiers paid. Drunken police and armed activists also frequently engaged in hooliganism that authorities did not regard as a crime. Some perfected their marksmanship by firing at the village church; others shot at crosses on graves.[40] On observing the drinking habits of Soviet police, Ukrainian nationalists concluded that "a Bolshevik would sell his mother for moonshine."[41] They exploited

[38] Timofei Strokach, "Dokladnaia zapiska o narusheniiakh sovetskoi zakonnosti v organakh NKVD-NKGB [Report on violations of Soviet legality by NKVD and NKGB]" (2 June 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2410, ll. 102, 103.

[39] Loburenko, deputy minister of internal affairs of Ukraine, to Korotchenko, "Soobshchenie [Report]" (31 March 1946), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 424.

[40] Kashnin, deputy COS of the 65th Rifle Division, "Spravka o boevoi podgotovke [Report on combat training]" (February 1947), PC, reel 199, p. 89; Rudenko, prosecutor of Ukraine, "Soobshchenie o faktakh narusheniia sovetskoi zakonnosti [Report on violation of Soviet legality]" (24 February 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2370, l. 3.

[41] Klim, "Informatyvnyi zvit z bil'shovits'koi diinosti [Report on the Bolsheviks' actions]" (30 August 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 926, l. 36.

this vice with considerable success by attacking small garrisons during holidays because the soldiers were too drunk to defend themselves. Grushetskii believed that "most of our casualties occurred when people were drunk."[42]

The scattered, incomplete, and overlapping data presented by the Prosecutor's Office on police crimes in the western regions are confusing, but they reveal the scale of lawlessness, the types of crimes, their statistical distribution, and their perpetrators. In 1945, 638 soldiers of security units in the Ukrainian Military District contracted venereal diseases, and 2,573 were arrested for drunkenness. Because officers enjoyed more freedom than privates, they were proportionally more involved in crimes. In the first six months of 1945, 10.9 percent of privates and 24.2 percent of officers serving in security units in the Ukrainian Military District were punished for "breach of military discipline and moral decay."[43] Prosecutors found 1,109 crimes perpetrated by all representatives of the authority in four West Ukrainian provinces in 1945[44]; no doubt many evaded justice with the help of their superiors. Of 326 policemen and soldiers of security units prosecuted from January to November 1945, 3.7 percent received capital punishment, and 52.4 percent were imprisoned for 6 to 10 years, 17.8 percent for 3 to 5 years, and 9.2 percent for less than 3 years; sentences were suspended for 3.1 percent, and 13.8 percent were sent to penal units.[45] In 1946, when the authorities began registering crimes more strictly, they reported 1,602 offenses committed only by police and security units in the entire western Ukraine, although the actual number of crimes declined compared with the previous year, as is clear from the periodic overviews made by the prosecutors.[46] Of all police offenses committed in western Ukraine between August and November 1946, illegal executions constituted 9.3 percent, rapes of female prisoners 4.7 percent, robberies 17.3 percent, and illegal interrogation methods, which were rarely registered, 38.7 percent.[47] The NKVD Military Tribunal in Lithuania tried 328 policemen "only for the most outrageous violations of Soviet laws – illegal executions, murders, rape and robberies" committed in 1945; during the first three months of 1946, it tried 137 policemen for such crimes, and it sentenced 149 policemen to jail terms

[42] "Protokol zasedaniia nachal'nikov RO MGB [Briefing of the heads of the district MGB offices]" (16 April 1947), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 90, l. 90.

[43] "Doklad o meropriiatiiakh po ukrepleniiu sovetsko-voinskoi distsipliny v voiskakh NKVD [Report on measures aimed to tighten combat discipline among the NKVD troops]" (26 March 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 144, ll. 15, 21.

[44] Document No. 6 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, pp. 72, 73. The total number of crimes in 1945 includes also those committed in two other provinces but only for two months and excludes illegal arrests.

[45] Sytenko, chair of the Military Tribunal of NKVD Troops of the Ukrainian Military District, "Spravka po delam ob osuzhdennykh za narushenie revoliutsionnoi zakonnosti [Report on prosecution of the guilty in violation of revolutionary legality]" (December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2437, ll. 85, 86.

[46] Document No. 58 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* p. 279. These data exclude illegal arrests.

[47] Document No. 54 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 263.

between July and December of that year, whereas the Prosecutor's Office of Lithuania sentenced 692 civil servants during this period.[48]

In 1945, civilian administrators made up 30.5 percent of all the criminals in western Ukraine, district police 21.8 percent, soldiers of security units and the Red Army 24.1 percent, and militia 18.2 percent.[49] The district police was by far the smallest group; subsequently, it perpetrated crimes much more frequently than the others. Furthermore, the police and security units were responsible for most violent crimes committed by the authorities. In Lvov Province, they were involved in 56.5 percent of the robberies and 90 percent of the murders perpetrated by soldiers and civil servants.[50] S. Grimovich, military prosecutor of NKVD troops in Lithuania, calculated that of all police criminals in the first six months of 1945, 78.1 percent were district policemen, that is, those who worked amid the people and were supposed to be the primary pillar of law and order.[51]

All these crimes were violations of the official policy rather than deliberate attacks on local ethnic groups. The proportion of ethnic Russians among the criminals was high, but so was their proportion in the army and police. Thousands of members of local ethnic groups served in the police force, and hundreds of them committed crimes in their lands.[52] The violent environment, the immense power the police enjoyed in the absence of control by the civilian authorities, and alcohol equally corrupted men of every ethnic background.

11.3 Crimes Committed During Counterinsurgency Operations

Security forces perpetrated even more gruesome atrocities during counterinsurgency missions, including the execution of prisoners, the arbitrary murder of civilians, illegal retaliation, indiscriminate arrests, and illegal methods of interrogation. Soldiers summarily executed thousands of captured guerrillas or those they associated with them, as is clear from their reports (Table 11.1).

These data resemble the reports of German security forces on the Eastern Front in the disparity between the two sides' casualties and the number of killed versus captured.[53] They also show that most "bandits" were unarmed, since the police won these engagements and must have captured most of the weapons of killed and wounded insurgents. One interpretation of these data

[48] Documents No. 2.17 and 9.1 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, pp. 279, 3:77; Grimovich, "Kratkii obzor sudimosti rabotnikov militsii Litovskoi SSR," l. 68; V. Zhavoronkov to Zhdanov, "O rezul'tatakh proverki raboty TsK KP(b)L [Inspection of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party]" (17 August 1946), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 138, l. 62.

[49] Document No. 6 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, l. 72.

[50] TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2370, l. 28.

[51] Grimovich, "Kratkii obzor sudimosti rabotnikov militsii Litovskoi SSR," l. 72.

[52] Ibid.," l. 73.

[53] In October 1941, the 286th German Security Division reported that it had killed 715 Soviet partisans while losing 8 men; the 403rd Security Division shot 1,093 partisans "at no significant loss to itself," and the 707th Infantry Division captured 10,940 prisoners and shot

TABLE 11.1 *Samples from the Security Units' Reports about Casualties in Counterinsurgency Operations in Western Ukraine, 1944*

Date of the Engagement	Casualties Among the Insurgents		Of Those Armed	Casualties Among the Security Troops	
	Killed	Prisoners		Killed	Wounded
19.02.44	130	0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
27.03.44	434	10	Unknown	22	10
8.04.44	78	77	4	Unknown	Unknown
9.04.44	229	13	Unknown	2	2
10.04.44	300	14	38	28	39
11.04.44	98	1	14	1	3
15.04.44	200	15	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
16.04.44	238	6	16	3	10
26.04.44	448	0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
2.05.44	200	0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
14–15.05.44	634	221	99	1	2
21.05.44	251	104	Unknown	1	1
4.09.44	128	0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
18.09.44	300	0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1.11.44	98	1	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
15–30.11.44	271	6	Unknown	3	6
21.01.45	96	1	Unknown	0	2
15.02.45	177	3	Unknown	1	1
12.03.45	169	2	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Notes: The number of armed guerrillas was calculated from the number of captured weapons: a cannon needed 5 men to operate it; a trench mortar 3 men; a heavy machine gun 2 men; an anti-tank rifle 2 men; hand weapons 1 man; GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 130, ll. 156, 165, 299; d. 125, ll. 42, 45; f. 9401, op. 2, d. 65, ll. 130–131; RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, ll. 5, 162; Document No. 71 in Volodimir Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996), pp. 157–165.

is that usually security troops surrounded and combed an area where insurgents had been spotted, killing guerrillas, many more unarmed draft dodgers, and civilians suspected of being accomplices. The wounded were executed. Another interpretation is that the security forces inflated the scale of the engagements in their reports and exaggerated the losses they inflicted on guerrillas because their promotions and money bonuses depended on it. The police were repeatedly caught filing such reports.[54] The second interpretation does not exclude the first, however.

How far the killing of guerrilla prisoners and civilian detainees actually violated Soviet policy is uncertain. Top Soviet security agencies never

10,431 of them while losing 2 men killed and 5 wounded; Ben Shepherd, *War in the Wild East* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 84.

[54] General Fadeev, commander of the security troops of the Ukrainian Military District (23 July 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 144, l. 298.

ordered summary executions. In fact, they issued many warnings stating, "Commanders must inform the personnel that they cannot beat, let alone execute detainees. Officers and all personnel must know that … assaults and executions are illegal and harm our cause. They must bring every detainee to the NKVD office, where he will be treated in conformity with the law."[55] Yet senior commanders and politicians, including Stalin, regularly received reports claiming that losses of the security troops equaled only a small fraction of killed guerrillas, whereas "on average, every seven bandits share one rifle."[56] Such information implied the routine execution of unarmed people. By failing to act on police reports about engagements with the insurgents, Soviet leaders tacitly approved massacres of prisoners and civilian suspects in rebellious regions.

Some police commanders and party functionaries, particularly those who had participated in the anti-Nazi resistance and knew the value of intelligence from prisoners, thought these executions were counterproductive. Strokach, who had headed the Ukrainian Partisan Headquarters, reprimanded his subordinates: "Bandits are not taken alive but killed. The failure to capture prisoners deprives us of the opportunity to pursue band remnants and receive the intelligence necessary for the total destruction of the UPA and OUN underground." Vasilii Begma, secretary of the Rovno Provincial Party Committee and former head of the Rovno Partisan Headquarters, also protested the execution of prisoners for pragmatic considerations.[57] Some commanders and party leaders set an example: A lieutenant who shot three wounded guerrillas received a seven-year jail term.[58] However, most superiors did not punish their subordinates for killing captured guerrillas, and some explicitly encouraged these murders. Mikhail Slon', secretary of the Stanislav Provincial Party Committee, reproached security units for "soft fiber." He claimed: "They take many prisoners instead of exterminating them. During clashes in villages, they do not act severely, evading this necessity."[59] Such an ambiguous policy toward the execution of guerrilla prisoners encouraged trigger-happy soldiers to treat

[55] General Marchenkov, commander of the security troops of the Ukrainian Military District, "Prikaz vnutrennim voiskam NKVD Ukrainskogo okruga [Order to the NKVD security troops of the Ukrainian Military District]" (May 1944), PC, reel 17, p. 326. See also General Skorodumov, deputy commander of security troops of NKVD of the USSR (January 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 63v.

[56] General Sheredega to Apollonov, deputy people's commissar of internal affairs (15 June 1944), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 128, l. 36.

[57] Strokach, "Vsem komandiram chastei vnutrennikh voisk," l. 5; V. Begma, secretary of the Rovno Provincial Party Committee, "Spravka o nedostatkax v bor'be s nemetsko-ukrainskimi natsionalisticheskimi bandami [Report on the flaws in the struggle against German-Ukrainian nationalist bands]" (5 January 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1700, l. 9.

[58] General Skorodumov (January 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 63.

[59] Document No. 47 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 133; M. Slon', secretary of the Stanislav Provincial Party Committee, "Politdonesenie o khode mobilizatsii v RKKA [Political report on mobilization to the Red Army]" (29 August 1944), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 928, l. 179.

civilian suspects in the same way. Hundreds, possibly thousands of them were shot without interrogation or even an attempt to identify them. The State Prosecutor of Ukraine wrote:

> The NKVD troops … detained Mavron'ia Ustimchuk in Bordino Village, Ostozhetskii District, Rovno Province and brought her to the district center. Pikanov, head of the NKVD District Office, ordered Junior Lieutenant Logvinenko to take Ustimchuk to the town square and shoot her there. The order was carried out. It was established later that the three Ustimchuk's sons serve in the Red Army and her husband works for the defence industry. Similar incidents have occurred in other provinces too.[60]

Pikanov was court-martialed, as were most of those who committed similar crimes, but in 1944–1945, tribunals heard most such cases in camera, and even if they imposed severe penalties, this did little to prevent the continuation of such atrocities; policemen were unaware of such decisions, and unsanctioned violence continued. A report by the Ternopol Provincial Party Committee shows how arbitrary Soviet repressions sometimes were:

> On 16 February 1945, an operative group of the District NKGB Station detained 14 men in Rossokhovatets Village. Kholiavka, Secretary of the District Party Committee, present during the operation, ordered Perekrest, a police officer at the NKGB District Station, to select five men for execution. … The corpses of the executed men were left near the village council. The other detainees were taken to the district center … and since no evidence against them was found, they were released, and some were enlisted in the destruction battalion.[61]

Only in 1949 did police commanders begin a systematic struggle against the execution of suspected guerrillas.[62] This policy was apparently enforced, judging from the increasing number of taken prisoners versus killed guerrillas in the police reports and also from the lengthy explanations security troops had to write when they failed to capture cornered guerrillas alive.

Another type of illegal action was unsanctioned reprisals against families of guerrillas or their alleged sympathizers. The authorities presumed that relatives of the guerrillas could be deported but not killed. As in the case of guerrilla prisoners, however, some leaders kept violent rhetoric while urging their subordinates to intensify the struggle against insurgency. Khrushchev once told local officials: "Find the family members who are helping [the resistance] and arrest them. … We won't be respected if we don't take harsh measures. We must arrest even the most unimportant ones. Some must be tried, others simply hanged, the rest deported. For one of ours, we will take a hundred of them. … [You] have not used enough violence! When you seize a village

[60] Rudenko, "Soobshchenie o faktakh narusheniia sovetskoi zakonnosti," l. 4.

[61] Kompanets, secretary of the Ternopol Provincial Party Committee, "Postanovlenie Biuro Ternopol'skogo Obkoma KP(b)U [Directive of the Bureau of the Ternopol Provincial Party Committee]" (23 May 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2382, l. 3.

[62] Colonel Iakhimovich (24 January 1949), PC, reel 174, p. 171; Fadeev, "Komandiram soedinenii vnutrennei okhrany MGB [To commanders of MGB security units" (9 June 1951), PC, reel 350, pp. 210, 211, 242, 243.

where [they] killed two women, you must destroy the entire village."[63] Such an outburst was merely a slip of the tongue in anger rather than an order for implementation. Neither Khrushchev nor other leaders ever issued written directives in the spirit of such rhetoric, but some policemen and local party officials took bloodthirsty remarks of this sort as a manual for action and conducted extralegal repressions that inevitably victimized not only alleged resistance supporters but also bystanders living in the rebellious regions. Most Soviet administrators, however, regarded such repressions as a serious offense, especially if the police had no proof of guilt. The chair of the NKVD Military Tribunal in Ukraine described one such "reprisal":

> On 22.09.1944, Cherednichenko, commander of a detachment of the 98th Frontier Guard Unit, pursued a band in Glovnianskii District, Volyn' Province. Suspecting that Zaiats was connected to UPA bandits, he illegally shot Zaiats, his wife and two of his children, four and six years old, and burned their house down. After that, he went to the house of Zaiats' father and ordered his men to shoot all present – Zaiats, his wife, two children, eight and twelve years old, and a man and woman who happened to be at the house at that time. The house was burned down. The military tribunal of Volyn Province sentenced Cherednichenko to capital punishment – execution by a firing squad.[64]

Destruction of guerrillas' homes was practiced as retaliation all over the world, although its deterrent effect was uncertain. The Soviet commanders never ordered the burning of entire villages, as the Bolsheviks had done during the civil war and which also had been the standard practice of the Nazis and Baltic police battalions on German service. They presumed that homes could be destroyed only if guerrillas were blocked inside, but they issued no explicit orders in this regard. When the commander of security troops in Lithuania found they were burning the homes of alleged enemies, he wrote: "Commanders must immediately stop these crimes." He promised to court-martial those who would fail to enforce his order.[65] The threat was apparently effective: Few reports on house burning in Lithuania were filed afterward. Ukrainian authorities reacted to destructions of suspects' homes less vigorously, and the police torched hundreds of houses. Even if they intended to burn selectively, often the fire went out of control because they were drunk. The Prosecutor of Ukraine described one of dozens of such cases:

> An operative group led by the police head Belash arrived in Krasievo Village. They opened fire without any grounds and then started to burn houses in different locations. As a result, 117 peasant houses were burned down, including 14 houses of [Soviet] soldiers. The members of the group killed 6 persons, including Mikhail Gron, born in

[63] William Taubman, *Khrushchev* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), p. 196.

[64] Sytenko, "Spravka po delam ob osuzhdennykh za narushenie revoliutsionnoi zakonnosti," l. 87.

[65] Sergei V. Zubrenkov, "Vooruzhennoe protivodeistvie natsionalistov Sovetskoi vlasti v Litve," Ph.D. dissertation, Moscow State University, 1999, p. 109.

1871, whose son serves in the Red Army. The operative group confiscated 60 head of cattle and wasted much of it. Many members of the operative group were drunk.[66]

Only in June 1946 did the MVD explicitly forbid such "retaliations." The new instructions stated: "A house can be burned only in exceptional circumstances, when all means to capture or liquidate the bandits blocked inside have been exhausted. … The burning of houses inside settlements, when the fire can spread to the houses of other peasants, is strictly prohibited."[67] This order was enforced, and house burning became rare.

The police routinely broke the law during arrests and investigations in the old territories and extended its methods to the borderlands. As with the executions of guerrilla prisoners, it is hard to conclude how far these crimes contradicted Soviet policy. The party officials received countless prosecutors' reports about these violations but ignored most of them, thus hinting that the end justified the means. The policemen sometimes interrogated wounded guerrillas on the battlefield. Their methods become clear from phrases like "shortly before the wounded bandit died, he testified … "; "during the interrogation of a wounded bandit by Junior Lieutenant Shcherbak, the dog Mak seized the bandit by his throat and strangled him to death."[68] The addressees of these reports made no comments, which suggests that they accepted the methods.

Sometimes soldiers took entire villages in for questioning. Most of those people soon were released, but many became antagonized from experiences like that described by Pavlo Gapochka, second secretary of the Lvov Provincial Party Committee:

> When soldiers come to a village, … they [often] arrest people who are not directly connected to the bandits. Our peasants are frightened. For example, in Novo-Miliatinskii District, soldiers detained 950 persons. … We sent skilled police officers who interrogated them for several days and … released all but 81 persons. … What do you think was the mood of the people after they had been locked in barns [for several days] where they had to stand and could sit or sleep only in turn?[69]

The police of Stanislav Province kept 210 persons in one cell.[70] According to the law, the NKVD could arrest a person only with a prosecutor's warrant but could detain anyone for 48 hours.[71] However, the police kept detainees

[66] Rudenko, "Soobshchenie o faktakh narusheniia sovetskoi zakonnosti," l. 2.

[67] Iakhimovich to commanders of the MGB security troops (30 October 1951), PC, reel 351, p. 242.

[68] Leont'ev to Riasnoi, "Operativnaia Svodka Nr. 96 [Operative report no. 96]" (4 May 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 572, l. 75; PC, reel 3, p.73; Document No. 14 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 433.

[69] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei raikomov partii [Minues of the meeting of the secretaries of district party committees]" (24 March 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 195, ll. 54, 55.

[70] Savchenko, people's commissar of the state security of Ukraine, "Order no. 0084" (25 April 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2416, l. 3.

[71] Document No. 3 in Stepashin, *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti,* Vol. 1, Book 1, p. 17.

in jails for weeks, months, or even years without a warrant,[72] and their party superiors, depending on policy at that moment, regarded this practice either as a legitimate method in the current circumstances or as a minor offence punishable with a reprimand.

If suspects died during interrogations, prosecutors sometimes launched criminal investigations against the officers who conducted them. Policemen who "merely" beat up suspects or faked executions usually were not punished. When the commander of an NKVD division found that two of his drunken officers had beaten up a detained woman with steel rods and then put pepper into her genitals, he only arrested them for a few days. In September 1945, General Sladkevich, deputy commander of the security troops, prohibited any violence during interrogation, but his order had little effect.[73] Occasionally, policemen were reprimanded or arrested for a few days or temporarily demoted or, rarely, prosecuted and sentenced.

Soviet soldiers committed crimes against borderland civilians because of poor supply, hatred toward "collaborators," and class-stratified perception of local societies. Alcohol abuse, a sense of impunity, and an urge to get at least some compensation for the misery they suffered on the Eastern Front escalated their rampages. None of these factors or motivations could explain the crimes of commando groups organized from converted guerrillas; they operated in their habitual environment, consumed less alcohol, rejected Communist ideology, and knew that the authorities would more likely prosecute them than the regular soldiers or police for crimes against civilians. Yet disguised as insurgents, some converts robbed, raped, and killed innocent peasants. Former resistance members and, after them, historians allege that this was a deliberate Soviet policy aimed to provoke antagonism between the resistance and the local population. The Soviets made identical claims about guerrillas who attacked civilians while impersonating Red Army soldiers or Red partisans.[74] In fact, neither Soviet nor resistance documents show that this was a deliberate strategy. Rather, these were the actions of units that went out of control and turned to plain banditry but believed that their superiors would not catch them if they operated under enemy guise. Recruitment to the Soviet service shattered moral values that converts had had but did not create a new "socialist" morality. Confused, desperate, and compelled to perform dangerous missions against their former comrades, some of them lived by present-day realities alone and attempted to extract whatever benefits they could from their risky and temporary jobs. The resistance dealt with the perpetrators of

[72] V. Gusarov, military prosecutor of the Frontier Guard Troops of the Lvov Military District (3 January 1952), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 4, d. 512, ll. 48–55.

[73] Sladkevich, deputy commander of the security troops (28 September 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 154v.

[74] Daumantas, *Fighters for Freedom,* pp. 81, 82; Reklaitis, "A Common Hatred: Lithuanian Nationalism during the Triple Occupation, 1939–1953," Ph.D. dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston, 2003, pp. 213, 215; A. V. Kentii, *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia v 1942–1943 rr.* (Kyiv: 1999), p. 234; Document No. 3 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* p. 264.

unauthorized violence more severely than did the Soviet counterinsurgents, but the latter never encouraged indiscriminate terror by commandos.[75]

Converted guerrillas became an integral part of the police system; police gave them a free hand in actions within permitted but poorly defined limits of law violations. When the cycle of antitorture rhetoric in the party committees was at its zenith and accusations of using "physical methods of coercion" could have serious consequences for policemen, they bypassed the regulations through the "special measures" (*liternye meropriiatiia*) performed by converts. The latter understood that they could get full pardon more easily if they arrested several "bandit accomplices," but if they could catch none, they forced innocent people to confess subversion, as their controllers often did. In June 1948, a commando unit abducted a young woman, Nina Repnitskaia, apparently suspecting that she was a member of the resistance. A police report about this incident stated: "While interrogating Repnitskaia, members of the commando unit beat her severely, hung her upside down by her legs, forced a stick into her genitals, and then gang raped her. In a helpless condition, Repnitskaia was abandoned in the forest."[76] If party inspectors or prosecutors blew the whistle about such methods, the policemen attributed the "violations of Soviet legality" to the incurable habits of the "former bandits." A military prosecutor investigating this and other similar cases wrote to Khrushchev: "Actions of these so-called MGB commandos have a starkly bandit-like, anti-Soviet character and, of course, cannot be justified by any operational considerations. … The victims of their arbitrariness are frequently persons with no connection whatsoever to the Ukrainian bandit nationalist underground." The prosecutor, however, was outraged more by the fact that the victims were innocent than that torture was used as an investigation method; he finished his report by stating that "any means are worth trying in the struggle" against the "bandit underground," and he blamed mainly the commandos rather than their controllers who had permitted actions of this sort. In response, Khrushchev ordered the prosecutor to "thoroughly investigate all flagrant violations of Soviet law and severely punish those who are guilty."[77] In this case, the perpetrators probably paid stiff penalties. Most officials understood, however, that commandos acted on police orders, and after all, regular security forces committed even more vicious crimes. Subsequently, the penalty for converts' offences depended on the personal attitudes of the individuals investigating the abuse. Some of them pretended to believe the police version and arrested the commandos, others dug deeper and punished the policemen who had authorized such operations, and many ignored or even tacitly encouraged

[75] Document No. 48 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 240; Document No. 4 in Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura,* p. 279.

[76] Jeffrey Burds, "*Agentura*: Soviet Informants' Network in Galicia, 1944–1948," *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 11(1):129, 1997.

[77] Documents No. 1 and 2 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* pp. 699–707.

the methods practiced by converts. The republican governments periodically discussed whether to disband the commando units, but they performed most of their missions so efficiently that they were preserved until 1949. Only in March of that year did the Ukrainian MGB formally abolish them.[78] Agents disguised as guerrillas continued to operate, but on a far smaller scale and usually under tight police control.

11.4 Crimes and Harassment by Civilian Administrators

Lower-ranking civilian administrators also were notorious for drunkenness, greed, and violence. Any social revolution stirs up the sediment of society from its bottom. Such persons used the disruption of the social fabric by Soviet-instigated upheaval to climb the ladder and take positions in the new administration. Jan Gross explains why the Soviet administration was contaminated by people with criminal pasts: In the Soviet view, before the western borderlands were "liberated," criminals were "no more than victims of class domination; they have been driven to crime by the living conditions created under capitalism. Thus, *a prison record in a bourgeois state indicates that one had been either a class enemy of the bourgeoisie or its victim*."[79] The authorities willingly appointed such people to serve as administrators at the lowest level. These administrators enjoyed enormous power over their neighbors and could easily make the life of anyone disobeying their orders hell; it was they who compiled deportations lists. Such power quickly corrupted those who had risen overnight from a despised status to the rural elite. Shcherbakov observed: "Illegal acts such as free dinners at peasants' houses, confiscation of food from them, various petty bribes and extortions, and alcohol abuse by district and provincial civil servants, police, soldiers, People's Defenders [militia], etc. are widespread. More serious violations of revolutionary legality, such as large bribes, robberies, assaults and murders, are also frequent."[80] A drunk Ukrainian Komsomol leader, for example, summoned two villagers and started to fire his pistol over their heads, calling them Bandera followers and demanding vodka. A district party secretary killed a teacher just for declining to drink moonshine with him.[81] Procurement campaigns typically were accompanied by assaults, arrests, or even threats of

[78] Document No. 21 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 7, p. 166.

[79] Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 57 (emphasis in original).

[80] V. Shcherbakov, head of the VKP(b) CC Bureau for Lithuania at the 11th Plenum of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist Party (23 November 1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 19, l. 35.

[81] Rusakov, "Dokladnaia zapiska [Report]," l. 108; Babak, instructor of the Organizer and Instructor Section, "Amoral'noe povedenie otdel'nykh rukovodiashchikh partiinykh i sovetskikh rabotnikov [Immoral behavior of some party leaders and administrators]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2404, l. 2; Strokach, "Dokladnaia zapiska o narusheniiakh sovetskoi zakonnosti v organakh NKVD-NKGB," l. 112.

execution. Some civil servants raped the peasant women they detained for failure to pay food taxes.[82]

Usually, however, civilian administrators perpetrated fewer violent crimes than the police – they resorted mostly to extortions and looting. They routinely raided the homes of peasants who could not pay taxes or even those who did pay them and robbed them, appropriating their possessions.[83] They also harassed neighbors just to prove their authority. A. Mishutin, state prosecutor of Latvia, wrote that one official demanded a criminal investigation be launched against those who failed to deliver scrap metal, another attempted to prosecute an eight-month-pregnant woman who ignored a summons to work as a lumberjack, and a third one threatened to use martial law against those who failed to participate in a sporting event, a cross-country run.[84] The Lithuanian authorities pressed young people to join the Komsomol, threatening to expel them from school if they failed to do so. Some Ukrainian administrators pressed people to buy government bonds, which in fact were a form of a semiobligatory extra tax, and detained those who refused.[85] Peasants had not experienced such humiliating harassment before World War II. While administrators often were prosecuted for criminal offenses – murder, rape, assault, and robbery – those who harassed the people usually remained unpunished. Petty tyranny of this sort stained the reputation of the regime.

In addition, Russian functionaries often violated Soviet ethnic policy. Officials belonging to local ethnic groups held most administrative positions in the borderlands, but civil servants from the old territories carried disproportionate weight in decision making. Despite Moscow's order prompting ethnic Russians to learn the local languages, Russian "nomenclature" sought to russify their environment. Only half the 81 Slavic members and employees of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist party made an effort to learn Lithuanian.[86] Ethnic Russians often displayed chauvinism and insubordination. For example, Smirnova, head of the personnel office in the Estonian People's Commissariat of the Timber Industry, "ignored the people's commissar, an Estonian, in all matters, claiming that he supported enemies of the people and swore at him in his office using obscene expressions."[87] Janis

[82] Document No. 1.5 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, pp. 123, 124; Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml', 1940–1953* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), pp. 176, 204.

[83] Documents No. 1.7 and 1.59 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 1, pp. 128–131, 257.

[84] Mishutin, state prosecutor of Latvia, "O vypolnenii postanovleniia Sovnarkoma Latviiskoi SSR [Implementation of the directive of the Latvian Council of People's Commissars]" (12 July 1945), RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 10, ll. 51–53, 66, 102.

[85] Documents No. 3.2 and 3.3 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 1, pp. 292, 293; Document No. 17 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 126.

[86] Documents No. 7.9 and 7.11 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 2, pp. 232, 234.

[87] F. Kaloshin, "O rabote s kadrami [Work with personnel]" (1 January 1946), RGASPI, f. 598, op. 1, d. 2, l. 119.

Kalnberziņš believed that "the arrogance and … disregard of ethnic culture by administrators … helped bourgeois nationalists in their subversion."[88]

11.5 Government Reaction to the Crimes Committed by its Representatives

The Soviet leaders planned to win the rural majority by benefiting them at the expense of the *kulak* minority, giving poor peasants unprecedented opportunity for social advancement and, in western Ukraine and Belorussia, by promoting the ethnic cultures of the titular nationalities. Local abuses and ambivalent policy toward them in the higher quarters undermined this effort. Though representatives of the authorities preyed mainly on wealthier farmers and the families of guerrillas, anyone could suffer from arbitrary violence. Many peasants personified Soviet power as a drunken robber in a police uniform able to kill or rape as he pleased. They contrasted Soviet district administrators with their predecessors in the independent states who were less violent and less corrupt. Information about abuses spread by word of mouth through the countryside. In the words of the Uniate priest P. Oliinyk, "The news 'The Muscovites are coming!' aroused more horror than the cry 'The Tatars are coming!' did among our forefathers."[89] Anticipating violence from security forces, thousands of peasants fled to the forests, where they were easily recruited by the guerrillas.

The top leaders in every republic realized that "each violation of Soviet laws produces great political damage and is exploited by hostile elements"; it "deprives our agencies of active help of the population, without which it is impossible to liquidate" the guerrillas.[90] They issued countless directives prohibiting unauthorized violence. General Andrei Eremenko, commander of the Carpathian Military District, explained to his subordinates: "The population of the western regions is ours, Soviet; it is behind the Soviet authorities, it has greatly helped the Red Army during the liberation and [continues to help] now, but it is terrorized [by UPA] and … it needs good relations with us and our support against Bandera bands. … Any offense or insult inflicted on civilians benefits only the foul bandits."[91] General Golovko, commander of security units in the Baltic Military District, ordered: "The slightest breach of discipline by soldiers who disgrace the army must be nipped in the bud, and every such violation must be severely punished." Antanas Sniečkus, first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist party, wrote: "The frequent breaking of socialist law by administrators

[88] Kalnberziņš, "Politicheskaia situatsiia v respublike," l. 36; M. Suslov, "O nedostatkakh i oshibkakh v rabote partiinoi organizatsii Litovskoi SSR [Flaws and errors of the Lithuanian party organization]" (1946), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 2, l. 55.

[89] P. P. Oliinyk, "Zoshyty," *UIZh* 9:101, 1993.

[90] Document No. 118 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3, p. 392; Document No. 7 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 817.

[91] Document No. 1 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, pp. 53, 54.

and soldiers, i.e. unlawful confiscations and appropriations of people's possessions, robbery and murders, and also the violation of Leninist-Stalinist ethnic policy ruin the prestige of the Soviet authorities."[92] Khrushchev demanded that "every violation of Soviet laws [by the security forces] must be investigated and the guilty must be severely punished"; every Ukrainian provincial party committee issued repeated warnings, stating: "Those guilty of plunder, abuse of power, breaching of party, state or military discipline … will be severely punished regardless of their position and the services they have rendered to the state – fired from their jobs, expelled from the party and prosecuted."[93] The Politburo of the Ukrainian Communist party issued nine directives, entitled, "Outrageous Violations of Soviet Legality in the West Ukrainian Provinces," between March 1945 and April 1954.[94] Each ordered the police and civilian administrators to observe the law or face severe penalties.

Senior police commanders always emphasized that repressions should be selective. Lieutenant-Colonel Tul'skii, Chair of the Military Tribunal of MVD troops in Lithuania, analyzed the motivations of policemen who violated the law. Some of them, having witnessed atrocities committed by guerrillas, "view every local resident as a bandit or a bandit accomplice." Others were "morally corrupt persons, careerists and idlers who seek to mask their inactivity by illegal actions against local residents – arrests, detentions and executions." Yet others had "profiteer motivations: They live off the local population and engage in illegal searches, confiscations of valuables, robberies and extortions."[95] Hundreds of Soviet policemen were sentenced to prison terms or a penal unit or executed for crimes against civilians. However, the Soviet regime could not curb police violence effectively. In the late 1946, Lithuanian officials still registered "numerous incidents of murders of innocent citizens, illegal arrests, beatings and raping of Soviet people and appropriations of their possessions" by the police and civilian administrators. In the same year, the Ukrainian provincial party committees forbade security troops to enter villages unless they had precise information about the presence of guerrillas.[96] This was an admission of impotence in the face of police crimes.

[92] General Golovko, commander of the security troops in the Baltic Military District, "Prikaz Nr. 006 [Order no. 006]" (February 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 160, l. 78; A. Sniečkus, "Otchet TsK KP(b)L o vypolnenii resheniia TsK VKP(b) [Report of the CC of the Lithuanian Communist party about the implementation of the directive of the VKP(b) CC]" (26 November 1945), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 412, l. 6.

[93] Document No. 77 in Vladimirtsev and Kokurin, *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom,* p. 244; Slon', "Postanova zasidannia biuro Stanislavs'kogo obkomu [Directive of the Stanislav Provincial Party Committee]" (22–23 February 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2389, l. 3.

[94] Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3.

[95] Document No. 9.1 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje,* Vol. 3, p. 78.

[96] Iakhimovich to Burmak, "Operativnaia svodka Nr. 7 [Report no. 7]" (14 August 1946), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 145, l. 442.

11.6 Causes for the Failure to Thwart Unauthorized Violence

"The end justifies the means" was a basic philosophy of the Soviet regime from the Bolshevik Revolution onward. Party bosses encouraged the police to overstep the law in order to bypass legal obstacles impeding advancement toward a goal. The gravest abuses of power occurred at the lowest level of administration. Uncontrolled and unaccustomed to observing the law, the district police, NKVD soldiers, and local civil servants broke it for the sake of the cause and their own profit. The government did not realize how grave the problem was until early 1945. From then on, the Soviet regime put a serious effort into reshaping the mentality of the local authorities. Senior leaders sought to enforce not the law but the limits within which it could be violated. They found this difficult not only because these limits were arbitrarily set and a culture of violence had taken root all over the borderlands but also because some aspects of political strategy, the weakness of the governmental institutions in the western regions, and Soviet bureaucratic culture frustrated their efforts.

The revolutionary methods employed for getting support from the peasants inevitably escalated the chaos, which facilitated crimes; selective but extensive repression of "class enemies" automatically entailed less discriminate violence. The police felt indispensable because they embodied the state in regions where the Soviet regime rested on bayonets. They enjoyed more power vis-à-vis civilian institutions in such regions than in the old territories, but the quality of their personnel was lower. The authorities had too few skilled policemen because they refused to employ those who had served under earlier regimes. The police force consisted of former partisans, promoted militia fighters, and demobilized Red Army soldiers without experience of police work. They were commanded by officers from the eastern regions who rarely spoke the local languages and had no idea of the local culture. The moral standards of easterners quickly degraded in the alien and tense environment. The state needed many policemen all at once, and its selection criteria were loose, the most important being social background. Intoxicated with sudden power, many of these people pursued their own rather than the government's interests.

Although superior to police officers, party officials were reluctant to confront their subordinates about crime because the police were their only protector, and many administrators, too, were violating the law, which the police could use against them. Officials from provincial party committees were more likely to address abuses by district police, but fearful of visiting regions infested with insurgents, they left district authorities to their own devices. The Soviet system of strict vertical control worked fairly well in ordinary circumstances but broke down in rebellious regions. Tyranny and corruption of police and administrators stemmed from the feeling of omnipotence and impunity they enjoyed. The Soviet leaders knew from the experience of the civil war that the fight against rural insurgency through instigation of class confrontation produced numerous abuses. Since they applied the same method in the western

borderlands, they regarded the illegal actions of those who were supposed to orchestrate social revolution as a natural, although regrettable collateral effect of their chosen strategy.

Without control from above, police applied "too lenient and belated measures against those who violated Soviet legality and sometimes connived with the crimes and covered them up."[97] In the first six months of 1945, not one case against the 64 policemen prosecuted in Lithuania was dropped, and only one of 51 in Lvov Province. The acquittal rate was much higher in civilian courts; in 1945, Soviet courts dropped 12.4 percent of criminal cases, and in 1948, they acquitted 10 percent of defendants.[98] This suggests that policemen were charged only if they had committed grave crimes. If a police commander could find any way to excuse a crime or if he regarded it as minor – like plunder, illegal arrests, and torture of suspects – he kept the case from a tribunal. In Lvov Province, 93 police crimes were recorded from 15 May 1944 to 30 August 1945, including 10 murders, 50 robberies and thefts, 14 illegal arrests, and 17 assaults. A criminal investigation was launched against only 33 policemen. The rest got away with disciplinary punishments, such as a few days of arrest, reprimands, and temporary demotions.[99]

A major problem in fighting criminality among police and administrators was the absence of a standard of justice. Penalties imposed on police offenders depended on the agent of prosecution. Army and police usually seek to keep civilian outsiders from investigating their crimes. So too, Soviet security forces limited the access of external agencies and had internal committees investigate police offenses. These bodies often obstructed justice. The NKGB committee that investigated the execution of 27 captured guerrillas in Ternopol Province sentenced the two police officers responsible for this crime to only 30 days of arrest and another one to 20 days.[100] In addition, Soviet jurisdictions had different reactions to the crimes of police and administrators. Local party bosses ignored abuses of power until they had overstepped limits defined by individual

[97] Strokach, "Dokladnaia zapiska o narusheniiakh sovetskoi zakonnosti v organakh NKVD-NKGB," l. 113.

[98] Grimovich, "Kratkii obzor sudimosti rabotnikov militsii Litovskoi SSR," l. 75; Document No. 132 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 4, p. 436; Prosecutor Office of the Lvov Province, "Dokladnaia zapiska o provedennoi rabote po bor'be s narusheniiami zakonnosti [Report on the struggle against the violations of law]" (1 July 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2390, l. 26; Peter Solomon, *Sovetskaia iustitsiia pri Staline* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1998), p. 359.

[99] Ptukha, "Spravka o kolichestve sluchaev narusheniia sovetskoi zakonnosti rabotnikami UNKVD L'vovskoi oblasti [Report on violations of Soviet legality by UNKVD officers of the Lvov Province]" (30 August 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2410, l. 211.

[100] Il'in, deputy head of the NKGB Personnel Office of Ternopol Province, "Spravka o sostoianii prestupnosti [Report on crime rate]" (20 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2436, l. 131. See another example in Gusarov, Deputy Military Prosecutor of NKVD Troops of Ukrainian Military District, "Spravka o narushenii sovetskoi zakonnosti ogranami NKVD i NKGB Stanislavskoi oblasti [Report on Violation of Soviet Legality by NKVD and NKGB in Stanislav Province]" (September 1945), TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, d.2410, ll.234, 235.

leaders. The authorities in Drogobych Province were far less tolerant of police violence than in Volyn', Rovno, and Stanislav provinces (Table 11.2).

Sometimes, seeking to set an example, the authorities imposed exceptionally harsh penalties. On 20 September 1945, three lieutenants and a soldier stole 52 items of clothes from a homestead in Sigulda Province, Latvia. One was executed, and the others were jailed for 10 years. Others who had committed worse crimes received lighter punishments. Tarkovskii, a Ukrainian policeman in Novyi Krapivnik Village who, in the words of a party inspector, "was (1) killing people in public places, (2) ... publicly assaulting people, (3) looting, etc." was demoted for a short time but later restored to his position. Then he attempted to rape a female doctor. When peasants freed the woman, he sprayed the village with submachine gun fire and threw several hand grenades but again escaped punishment. Lashenko, another Ukrainian policeman, illegally executed seven prisoners but received an eight-year suspended sentence. He did not spend one day behind bars.[101]

The penalties for police crimes depended on the class affiliation of the victims and whether they were suspected of helping the resistance. Typical penalties in the Soviet Union were a 10-year jail term or capital punishment for murder, an 8-year jail term for rape, and shorter terms for theft. Policemen usually received such penalties if the victim was innocent, had the proper social background, and had a relative in the Red Army. If the victim was identified as a *kulak* or the relative of a guerrilla, tribunals imposed lighter sentences. If the victims were guerrillas or suspects, cases rarely reached the tribunal. In Stanislav Province, military tribunals prosecuted 23 policemen for illegal executions committed from October 1944 to September 1945. No culprit was sentenced to death. Ten received 10-year prison terms, three from 5 to 9 years, nine from 1 to 5 years, and one a 1-year suspended sentence. Prosecutors found these sentences "lenient" and "inadequate"[102] and an encouragement to crime. In most cases, criminals from the security forces received far lighter sentences than civilians who perpetrated identical offenses. Often policemen who had killed several suspects were merely fired and never prosecuted, whereas a soldier who had questioned the idea of collective farms received 15 years in jail; a robbery of a "class ally" might be punished with an execution, and a robbery of a priest with a reprimand; a policeman who had illegally arrested a person for two days received an 8-year jail term, whereas another who had kept several men in custody from 3 to 6 months without a warrant and crippled them got 20 days of disciplinary arrest; policemen who raped women unconnected to the resistance received many years of jail, whereas those who raped female suspects got away with a few days of arrest or were not punished at all.[103] This double

[101] Il'iashchenko, secretary of the Personnel Office at Stanislav Provincial Party Committee (12 November 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2436, l. 54.

[102] Gusarov, "Spravka o narushenii sovetskoi zakonnosti," l. 244.

[103] Il'iashchenko (12 November 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2436, l. 54; TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2410, ll. 226, 237, 244; Document No. 38 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3, p. 187.

TABLE 11.2 *Penalties for Police Crimes in West Ukrainian Provinces, 1945*

Province	Executions		10-Year Jail Terms		5- to 9-Year Jail Terms		Less than 5-Year Jail Terms	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Volyn' 01.01.45–01.07.45	–	–	2	16.7	6	50	4	33.3
Stanislav 01.01.45–01.09.45	1	1.8	16	30.9	22	50	13	27.3
Rovno 01.01.45–01.12.45	1	2	10 (9–10 years)	20	29 (8–5 years)	58	10	20
Drogobych 01.01.45–01.09.45	9	21	14	31.8	15	34.1	5	11.4

Note: Excluding unidentified number of sentences by internal NKVD and NKGB committees.
Sources: Aleksandrov, military prosecutor of the NKVD Troops in the Drogobych Province, "Spravka po delam o narusheniiakh sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti sotrudnikami NKVD i NKGB [Report on violations of socialist legality by NKVD and NKGB officers]" (7 September 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2410, ll. 220, 221; Gusarov, "Spravka o narushenii sovetskoi zakonnosti," l. 244; Shuriaev, head of the UNKVD Special Committee, "Spravka po sledstvennym i administrativnym delam na sotrudnikov UNKVD Rovenskoi oblasti [Report on criminal and administrative investigations against UNKVD officers of the Rovno Province]" (18 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2410, l. 299.

standard in prosecuting police offenders made them more careful in their selection of victims but did not discourage crimes (Table 11.3).

To deter the abuses of power, the state launched a series of show trials against perpetrators beginning in the late summer of 1945. Regional police chiefs sent periodic reviews of court-martials to their subordinates to teach them a lesson.[104] Most show trials were open only to police officers; in fact, they were ordered to attend them. In the rare cases when trials were public, the government believed that hearings in the venues where the defendants committed their crimes would damage the prestige of its other employees in these regions and conducted them elsewhere. While this policy made policemen aware that breaking the law entailed punishment and thus contributed to crime prevention, peasants knew little about the state's effort to curb police violence. They saw only that one policeman who had perpetrated grave crimes for a long time with impunity was replaced by another, whereas the government deported prosperous farmers who had not violated any Soviet law. Such incomprehensible justice crippled the reputation of the Soviet administration.

The authorities learned about only some of the crimes committed by the police. The Prosecutor of Lithuania wrote: "The small number of complaints filed with the provincial executive committees, inconsistent with the large number of crimes, suggests that people are often afraid to complain about the offenses committed by NKVD, militia and other officers."[105] If peasants reported a petty police crime, the district administration showed the complaint to the responsible officer and most often reprimanded him but took no other action. Even during a criminal investigation, the accused officer usually retained his position and intimidated the claimant. When the residents of Nigovtsy Village in Stanislav Province complained about two policemen who had committed rape and robbery, the perpetrators warned the claimants that if they pursued their claims, they would shoot them and fired their submachine guns to prove they were serious.[106] This flaw in the Soviet legal system limited the government's ability to comprehend the scale of the local abuses and develop a remedy against them.

The command method in Soviet bureaucratic culture also affected legality in the western borderlands. From the first Five-Year Plan onward, Soviet administrators became accustomed to functioning according to plans from above with arbitrary time frames in the conviction, as one famous slogan had it, that "there are no fortresses that Bolsheviks cannot conquer." Lower-level administrators understood that these demands were impossible, but they had

[104] TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1762, l. 28; d. 2408, l. 67; d. 2410, ll. 212, 221; d. 2442, l. 5; Document No. 34 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 184.

[105] Baliasnikov, prosecutor of Lithuania, to Suslov, "Dokladnaia zapiska o narusheniiakh sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti v Shakiaiskom i Alitusskom uezdakh [Report on violations of socialist legality in the Šakiai and Alytus provinces]" (4 August 1945), RGASPI, f. 597, op. 1, d. 1, l. 189.

[106] Slon', "Doklad[Report]" (no date), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2408, l. 32.

TABLE 11.3 *Crime and Punishment, Soviet Style: No Correlation between the Gravity of Crimes and the Severity of Penalties*

Perpetrator	Nature of the Crime	Penalty
Assaults and Illegal Arrests		
S. Marchenko, head of Regional NKGB Section	Illegally arrested and tortured several persons during interrogations	Expelled from the party
Popov, head of NKGB District Station	Beat up detainees	Severe reprimand
Captain Mashkovtsev, acting head of the Bolekhovskii District NKGB Section	Beat suspects, inflicting heavy bodily injuries; kept them in jail for 3–6 months without warrant	20 days of arrest
Fedor Shepetukha, deputy chair of the Matseevskii Executive Committee	Beat up a woman	4-year jail term
P. Iuzkov and F. Iakovlev, wardens at the Lvov jail	Illegally arrested two men for two days; Iuzkov lost a weapon	Iuzkov: 8-year jail term Iakovlev: 6-year jail term
Robberies		
Lieutenants I. Koval'chuk, A. Matveev, and A Ivanov, 10th Reservist Regiment	Armed robbery	Koval'chuk: executed Matveev and Ivanov: 10-year jail terms
K. Pishida, A. Malikov, and D. Shubin, security guards at the Drogobych NKGB Provincial Department	Multiple robberies of apartments	All executed
Vasil'chenko, head of the Khodorovskii NKVD District Section	Robbery of a priest	Reprimand
Vashnin, policemen at the Tlumachskii NKVD District Section, and Shumilov, head of a firefighter unit	Robbery of a prosperous peasant	Several days of arrest
S. Iakub, destruction battalion fighter in the Stryi District	Stole 6 kilograms of bacon and two soldier coats	2-year jail term
Lieutenant Alexandr Nakonechnyi, officer at the Zolotnikovskii NKVD District Section	Multiple petty theft	5 years of hard labor

Perpetrator	Nature of the Crime	Penalty
Illegal Executions and Murders		
P. Prilepin, head of the Voinilovskii NKVD District Section	Illegally confiscated cattle and executed three detainees without investigation	Fired
A. Liashenko, head of the Bogorodchankii NKVD District Section	Executed seven detainees without investigation	Suspended 8-year jail term
Shchegul'nyi, policeman at the Iavorovskii NKVD District Section	Executed two detainees	3-year jail term
Aleksandr Gruzdaev, private of 32nd Security Division	Raped and murdered a 14-year-old girl	10 years of hard labor
Tarkovskii, policeman in Novyi Krapivnik	Several murders, assaults, plunder, attempted rape	Temporarily demoted; later restored to the same position
A. Lobanov, policeman at the Strusovskii NKGB District Section	Killed four persons	Arrested for a few days; after a prosecutor's protest, sentenced to 7 years of jail
Poduval'tsev, head of the Rudkovskii District Police	Killed a Soviet activist and burned down nine houses, three of which belonged to Soviet soldiers	Expelled from the party
A. Abroskin, officer at the Vyshkovskii NKVD District Section	Killed several persons	Executed
Junior Lieutenant Berestenev, officer at the Kokovskii NKVD District Section	Killed a woman, claiming falsely that she was connected to UPA	No punishment, after additional investigation passed to tribunal
Rape		
Matveev, police officer at the Solotvinskii NKVD District Section	Raped two female prisoners and a prisoner's wife, attempted to rape another prisoner	20 days of arrest, fired
Dem'ianik, policeman at the Zbariazhskii NKGB District Section	Raped witnesses, threatening them with a weapon	Fired
Major Prokhorenko and Lieutenant Novgorodov, 117th NKVD Regiment	Attempted rape	Arrested for a few days

(continued)

TABLE 11.3 *(continued)*

Perpetrator	Nature of the Crime	Penalty
Junior Lieutenant Koval'chuk, police officer at the Koropetskii NKVD District Section	Two attempted rapes; beat up another person	15 years in labor camps
P. Kolesnik, chair of commercial network in Pomorianskii District	Several attempted rapes	Expelled from the party
Smirnov, policeman from Ternopol	Rape and robbery	10 years of hard labor
Egorov, police officer in Stanislav Province	Raped a pregnant witness	5 years of hard labor
Other		
S. Meshcheriakov, private of the 32nd Security Division	Spread anti-Soviet propaganda against the collective farm system and Stalin's constitution	15-year jail term
Senior Lieutenant Aleksandr Beliaev, 32nd Security Division	Being drunk, accidentally wounded himself, and lost a revolver	5-year jail term

Sources: TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2393, l. 7; d. 2436, l. 54; d. 2450, ll. 4, 5; d. 2410, ll. 213, 218, 237, 309; d. 2415, ll. 12, 15, 19; d. 2443, l. 1; d. 1695, l. 124; d. 2370, l. 3; RGASPI, f. 600, op. 1, d. 4, l. 168; Document No. 132 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 4, pp. 426, 427, 430; Documents No. 6, 23, 32, and 36, ibid., Vol. 5, pp. 75, 144, 179, 188.

to demonstrate that they had done everything possible to meet them. Thus, without regard for reality, Stalin demanded that republican leaders quickly crush the resistance. In turn, the leaders ordered secretaries of provincial committees to destroy the insurgency within a few weeks or months, threatening to punish them if they failed. On 10 January 1945, Khrushchev ordered provincial authorities to suppress resistance in Ukraine within six weeks. On 26 February 1945, he extended the deadline to 15 March.[107] When it passed, he wrote a letter to every provincial party committee:

You were supposed to liquidate the bands of Ukrainian-German nationalists in your province by 15 March. ... However, on 16 March tens of bands and hundreds of bandits still operated in your province. Therefore, you failed to fulfill the directive of the CC of the Ukrainian Communist party and broke your promise. ... You must

[107] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei RK KP(b)U [Meeting of the Ukrainian district party committee secretaries]" (25 January 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 192, l. 52; "OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini," *UIZh* 3:101–105, 1995.

explain within three days why you failed … and inform the CC about the measures you intend to take.[108]

The relentless pressure on provincial authorities continued: On 24 July 1945, Khrushchev demanded destruction of the resistance by the end of August; on 30 October 1945, he shifted the deadline to 1 December 1945, and on 5 April 1947, he again ordered them to eradicate it within two months.[109] He wrote threatening memoranda to provincial secretaries after the deadlines and suggested actions that violated the law, such as "retaliations" against wealthy peasants and priests unconnected to resistance.[110] In turn, provincial secretaries ordered the police to do whatever was necessary to destroy the insurgency quickly. The Ukrainian party leaders proclaimed: "If a [security] unit commander encountered an [UPA] band but failed to destroy it, this should be regarded as a crime." This became a military order: "Those guilty for each failed operation aimed to destroy the [UPA] bands should pay stiff penalties – up to removal from their position and prosecution by a military tribunal."[111] Frightened by such rhetoric, security troops strove to prove their efficiency, which was assessed by the number of liquidated insurgents rather than guerrilla activity. This pressure led to illegal sweeping arrests, torture, and random executions of civilians. Major-General Skorodumov, deputy commander of NKVD units, wrote that to demonstrate their zeal the security troops

… repeatedly violated revolutionary law, illegally shooting arrested bandits, suspects in banditry and innocent civilians, and needlessly burned villages and homesteads. On 14.10.1944, Junior Lieutenant Dorofeev, commander … of an NKVD security platoon, … killed without any reason eight workers of a prospector team. … On the same day, passing through a village, he shot dead a teenage girl and a boy. On 19 November

[108] N. Khrushchev (March 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1693, ll. 54, 55.

[109] Khrushchev to Stalin (20 December 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1848, l. 399; Grushetskii to Khrushchev, "Otchet o rezul'tatakh bor'by s bandami ukrainsko-nemetskikh nationalistov v Lvovskoi oblasti [Report on struggle against Ukrainian-German nationalists in the Lvov Province]" (16 November 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 288; Bogorodchenko to Zlenko, "Informatsiia o reagirovanii ukrainsko-nemetskikh natsionalistov na iavku s povinnoi [Report on reaction of the Ukrainian-German nationalists on the amnesty]" (27 July 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1691, l. 269; Document No. 6 in Serhiichuk, *Desiat' buremnykh lit,* p. 574. Even police professionals, such as MVD Minister Sergei Kruglov, set deadlines for the elimination of resistance, although they certainly realized that social conflicts defied deadlines; Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml'*, p. 254.

[110] "Stenogramma rechi t. Khrushcheva na zasedanii sekretarei obkomov [Minutes of Comrade Khrushchev's speech at the meeting of secretaries of provincial party committees]" (15 May 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2420, l. 5.

[111] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei raikomov partii [Meeting of the secretaries of the district party committees]" (24 November 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 202, l. 76; Khrushchev (16 July 1945), TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2412, ll. 3–5; General Marchenkov, commander of the security troops of the Belorussian Military District (5 September 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 147v.

he killed two elderly men. He reported all killed as bandits. … Such incidents disgrace NKVD soldiers and ruin their prestige.[112]

Naturally, when pressed to violate the law within unidentified limits, policemen often overstepped them. Abuse of power was a logical outcome of Soviet administrative culture.

Like most other Communist policies, counterinsurgency proceeded as a series of party-led political campaigns; some pacification aspects suddenly became dominant for a while and then as suddenly ran out of steam for no apparent reason. The period of show trials, the party intervention into police tactics in 1945, and fervent recruitment of militia in early 1946 without the effort to train them or even screen fighters were examples of such campaigns. The fight against random violence also proceeded as a series of campaigns; the party periodically made examples of some perpetrators but then inexplicably weakened its effort to terminate the abuses until the next sudden surge of love for justice. Some such brief and frantic campaigns stemmed not so much from concern for borderland civilians or for the rationality of Soviet policy but from interservice rivalry. In the second half of the 1940s, top MVD officers struggled against those of MGB for dominance in the Soviet power structure and reported violations of the law by the rival agency, hoping thus to stigmatize it among the supreme party leaders.[113] The precarious maneuvering in the higher echelons of the Soviet bureaucratic apparatus taught officials to routinely collect compromising evidence against their rivals and be prepared to pour it like an avalanche as soon as their superiors signaled a new round of power struggles. This practice led to heated fights for justice that ended abruptly as soon as the rivals were defeated or the top police officers directing the campaign received a hint from their party superiors that they should postpone their attacks until better times.[114]

The Prosecutor's Office was the primary agency that was supposed to defend the law. Prosecutors were no saints; some were drunkards, and others were caught in looting or rape.[115] Yet they still led the fight against corruption and abuses of power, although they did so in chains. In theory independent from party agencies, in practice, they had to work with local party bosses. Each party directive demanding an end to violations of the law drove prosecutors into a frenzy for a while, but they had little executive power. They wrote dozens of reports exposing corrupt administrators and police and filed appeals, often successful, on behalf of the defendants if investigators or courts violated procedures. Had Communist bosses wished to uphold the law, they

[112] General Skorodumov, deputy commander of security troops of NKVD of the USSR (January 1945), RGVA, f. 38650, op. 1, d. 134, l. 63.

[113] I am grateful to Jeffrey Burds and Victor Statiev who attracted my attention to this motivation behind some campaigns for justice.

[114] Power struggle among the top police commanders is reflected in Yoram Gorlizki and Oleg Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 29, 60, 114–117.

[115] TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 2392, l. 1; d. 2410, l. 281.

would have supported prosecutors; instead, they ignored these reports or even obstructed justice. Such intervention was illegal but was blessed by Prosecutor General Andrei Vyshinskii, who stated: "Only an incompetent party secretary would allow prosecutors and judges to do whatever they want."[116] Stalin's decree of 1 December 1938 gave party secretaries the right to decide whether a prosecutor could launch a criminal investigation against a party member.[117] Since most police officers were party members, the secretaries could veto criminal cases against them or affect the penalties. They believed prosecutors should enforce the law selectively, punishing corruption while letting the security agencies act illegally against suspected enemies. The police, however, claimed that prosecutors impeded their investigations: "We make bandits confess, but the prosecutor office believes that an [interrogation] protocol alone is insufficient, that an independent corroboration is necessary."[118] Most party leaders disliked prosecutors' pedantry, believing that a mere suspicion of subversion was a sufficient reason to cut corners in legal procedure. The MGB Special College, which received broad powers for the duration of the war and continued, after its end, to hold trials in absence of defendants, defense lawyers, and witnesses, helped party leaders to bypass prosecutor control. It was dissolved only in September 1953, and by this time, it had tried, in the case of Lithuania, one-third of all guerrilla suspects.[119] Ultimately, Ukrainian provincial party secretaries rebelled. Grushetskii proclaimed:

> The prosecutors are overzealous. Sometimes they don't search for the enemy of Soviet power but hide behind the formal thesis of observing revolutionary legality and thus in fact serve the counterrevolutionary cause. Prosecutors … have created a pleasant environment for bandits. … We should fight those who violate revolutionary legality, but at the same time, we have to fight overzealousness. … We need not bureaucrats but Bolsheviks who would help the district party committees and the officers of MVD and MGB. Overzealous [prosecutors] should be treated as enemies of the people.[120]

Violent rhetoric of this sort made prosecutors reluctant to investigate police crimes until subsequent party directives targeting the abuses of power reinvigorated them.

Conclusion

By the time the Red Army reached the borderlands, its soldiers were striving to exact revenge on the enemy territories. Years of fierce fighting had eroded their moral standards. They were uninterested in why so many civilians in

[116] Solomon, *Sovetskaia iustitsiia pri Staline,* pp. 280–283.

[117] Hilda Sabbo, ed. *Võimatu vaikida,* Vol. 1 (Tallinn: 1996), p. 433.

[118] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei raikomov partii [Meeting of the secretaries of the district party committees]" (29 October 1945), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 201, l. 3.

[119] Document No. 351 in Sabbo, *Võimatu vaikida*, Vol. 2, p. 1009; Document No. 9.7 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 3, p. 88.

[120] "Protokol zasedaniia sekretarei raikomov partii [Meeting of the secretaries of the district party committees]" (3 December 1946), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 1, d. 409, l. 97.

the western regions disliked the regime they defended; they perceived these civilians as supporters of those who had ruined their homeland. The slogan "Soldier, you are the judge!" coined by the Soviet writer Ila Eyrenburg,[121] had taken root in the Red Army by 1944. Communist propaganda incited class confrontation, but a culture of indiscriminate violence emerged from below. Unlike early Bolsheviks, the Soviet government never gave carte blanche to the security agencies during the counterinsurgency campaign in the borderlands. It wanted repressions to be centralized and selective. In practice, its pacification was marked as much by random as by sanctioned violence. A state engaged in counterinsurgency cannot avoid arbitrary violence. In the Soviet case, it was exacerbated by such factors as the nature of the Soviet regime; the view that guerrillas were German collaborators, which escalated endorsed and unauthorized repressions; the inadequate supply of Soviet soldiers and security forces and their low living standard compared with the local people, which tempted them to rob hostile civilians; alcohol abuse; and social revolution from above as a means to establish control over the borderlands. Stereotypically, the security apparatus of a totalitarian state is an obedient tool of the regime. This assumption is correct only for areas a government firmly controls; in rebellious regions, where such control is impossible, a regime delegates its officials and soldiers extraordinary powers and lets them violate the law and its own directives if it believes most of these violations achieve the desired ends. If so, the state can turn a blind eye on profiteering or random assaults on civilians. Since a totalitarian state is not designed to react to its citizens' complaints, it must permanently monitor its civil servants and security agencies to ensure that they promote its policy more than their own interests, but it cannot do so in rebellious regions.

The police broke the law in the tense borderland environment far more frequently than they did in the old territories. Of all the crimes MGB officers committed in Ukraine in 1945, 70 percent occurred in the borderlands, although the population there equaled only one-fifty of the republic's total.[122] High-ranking officials, including Stalin, encouraged actions that contradicted the law and official directives but expected administrators and police to do so only to facilitate the advance toward the government's goals. Violence was easy to unleash but much harder to keep focused on "class enemies." The local strongmen whom the state entrusted to conduct social revolution but whom it could not control became "double agents of order and disorder"[123] who enforced some aspects of government policy but ruined others in pursuit of their own goals. Their crimes prompted many whom the regime regarded as class allies, even those rewarded by its social reforms, to join the guerrillas. The Soviet government severely punished many administrators and policemen

[121] V. O. Daines and V. V. Abaturov, *Pravda of shtrafbatakh* 2 (Moscow: Eksmo, 2008), p. 271.

[122] Document No. 34 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 5, p. 183.

[123] Paul J. Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), p. xi.

who overstepped the limits of law violations believed to be conducive to success, in fact, more severely than democracies did in similar cases. However, it punished these "rotten apples" only long after they had engaged in rampages because it was short of good personnel, it learned belatedly about the crimes because party officials protected their subordinates and suppressed negative information, and the agencies monitoring the law were intimidated, and no standard of justice existed. Thus Soviet counterinsurgency became far more brutal than it was intended to be, and many bystanders fell victim to it. As Paul Vanderwood points out, "Order and disorder are not opposites but a matter of balance."[124] Most illegal actions occurred in 1944–1946 while the western countryside remained a no-man's land between the government and the guerrillas. As the regime began establishing firmer control in 1947, it gradually curbed most infringements of the law; however, some unsanctioned violence, such as crimes caused by alcohol abuse, continued on a lower scale until the end of the resistance, as did the types of offenses the state tolerated, such as illegal arrests and torture during interrogation.[125]

[124] Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress,* p. 164.

[125] Documents No. 169, 170, and 174 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 3, pp. 495–498, 508, 509; Geoffrey Swain, *Between Stalin and Hitler: Class War and Race War on the Dvina, 1940–1946* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p. 201.

12

Conclusion

Nationalist Resistance and Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Global Context

I have pursued four goals in this book. First, I have addressed the nature of the conflict in the western borderlands. Second, I have made a comparative analysis of the anti-Soviet resistance movements and outlined their goals, strategies, composition, strengths and weaknesses, and relations with the population. Third, I have conceptualized the Soviet pacification doctrine, showed the means that the state used against insurgents, and examined the problems connected with implementation of the intended policy. I proceed now to my last objective: to highlight the peculiarities of nationalist resistance and Soviet counterinsurgency in the global context.

Popular resistance is an important part of national mythology. Glossy images of an audacious *maqui,* a Robin Hood–style *haidut,* and a simple but proud *Zapatista* are cherished by the French, Balkan, and Mexican nations, whose governments promote legends about these personages in order to foster national unity. Fences in Chihuahua greet visitors with the slogan, "Viva Villa!"; the monuments to antifascist partisans in Bulgaria outnumber the actual participants in the resistance against a Bulgarian regime that was anything but fascist; and the inhabitants of La Higuera Village who betrayed the location of Ernesto Guevara's band to a military unit extol the famous *guerrillero* in conversations with frequent pilgrims. Italian leftists still march to *Bella ciao* during their street rallies; Geronimo became a favorite Hollywood personage; towns of the Gaza Strip proudly display huge images of *shaheeds* who blew themselves up in Israeli buses; only rare parties in Macedonia proceed without a song about Iane Sandanski; and entrepreneurs in Chiapas make handsome profits by selling kitschy T-shirts with pictures of subcomandante Marcos.

In contrast, counterinsurgents are most often antiheroes, despised and abhorred by the liberal public even if their policy was fairly popular at the time when they fought the rebels and if they inflicted fewer civilian casualties

than guerrillas. There are no monuments devoted to Mexican *rurales,* who made their country bandit-free for the first time in its history. Captain Gary Salmon Prado, who caught Ernesto Guevara, is not a hero of Bolivian folklore. The production of T-shirts with pictures of Robert Thompson, whose strategy in Malaya became a classic example of sophisticated counterinsurgency, would have ruined their manufacturers. Few Peruvians like Vladimiro Montesinos, who commanded the successful campaign against Sendero Luminoso, a Marxist guerrilla movement so notorious that all other Latin American Marxists believe it discredited their cause. No songs glorifying the Russian troops in Chechnya will ever be written. However, Chechens probably will pass from generation to generation legends about Shamil Basaev, the guerrilla commander who hijacked a civilian airplane in 1991, took hostage a thousand patients in a Budenovsk Maternity Hospital in 1995, and nine years later organized the raid on a primary school in Beslan, killing 331 civilians, half of them children. Even Western media never called him a "terrorist" but a "fighter" or a "rebel."

I have attempted to separate popular perceptions of insurgency and counterinsurgency from the facts relayed to us by primary documents. These facts show that the opponents in the borderlands did not fit the stereotypes of idealistic freedom fighters and Stalinist perpetrators who relied exclusively on indiscriminate violence. The insurgents and the security forces matched each other in unscrupulousness and ruthlessness. Furthermore, the conflict in the borderlands was a complex phenomenon that involved many facets besides the fight between nationalist guerrillas and Soviet police. People's attitudes toward the opponents were shaped by the interaction of such factors as nationalism, economic and social status, class consciousness, political culture, ethnic identity, opportunism, and circumstance. The relative importance of these factors varied by region and social group and depended on the intensity of social strains stemming from the interwar period and exacerbated during the war, the experience under German occupation, the conflict between local culture and Soviet policies, and the impact of guerrilla warfare and counterinsurgency campaigns.

The resistance consisted of ideological enemies of communism, those driven by patriotic motivations, peasants resenting Soviet agrarian policy, Nazi collaborators, members of social groups targeted by Soviet repressions, and conscripts. Their leaders were predominantly middle and lower middle class urban nationalists, but the rank-and-file supporters were mostly peasants, motivated less by nationalism or class hatred than by concern for their own welfare and security. Nationalism became a banner under which patriots and ideological enemies of the Soviet regime unified all those who hated the Communists for various reasons. Anti-Communist sentiments were strong in the cities too, but since armed resistance was possible only in the countryside, the attitudes of urban dwellers mattered little. Some insurgents fought for liberal ideals, but most supported authoritarianism, and many enthusiastically engaged in ethnic cleansing, which was sanctioned by top nationalist leaders.

The resistance did fight Soviet security forces, but the overwhelming majority of its victims were local civilians. Some resistance groups, such as the AK did not collaborate with the Nazis, and UPA actively fought them for half a year, but most other nationalists, as well as the UPA, cooperated with the Germans more than they resisted them. The insurgents never enjoyed unanimous or unqualified support from the people of the western regions, whereas members of the same ethnic groups in the old territories resented the rebels.

The insurgents fought the security forces supported by the short-term winners from agrarian reform, farmers whose social status had risen under the new regime, specialists sent by the government from the east, opportunists of all sorts, and those whom guerrilla terror drove to side with the authorities – in particular, deserters from guerrilla units, demobilized Soviet soldiers and their families, peasants who strove to avenge relatives killed by the insurgents, and everyone tired of turmoil. The ethnic minorities, even those among which anti-Communists dominated, resolutely sided with the state against the insurgents. Coercion was central to Soviet pacification, but the government learned from the mistakes it had committed during the civil war. It abstained from burning entire villages in rebellious regions, executing hostages, and firing at crowds of rioting civilians; it also downplayed its atheistic ideology and engaged the church in the pacification to make it less violent. Furthermore, it put more effort into social reforms than have most other states conducting counterinsurgency. Local ethnic groups constituted a large part of the Soviet security forces, and the militia was overwhelmingly local. The Soviet pacification policy had ethnic dimensions and disproportionately hit diaspora nationalities, but repressions against diasporas in the western borderlands were less brutal than was the ethnic cleansing conducted by nationalists. Some atrocities committed by the security forces were institutionalized, but many were the outcome of random violence, and the perpetrators were often punished.

How did nationalist resistance in the borderlands compare with its Marxist counterparts? It is hard to rank guerrilla movements according to their efficiency because their capacity to fight their regimes depended on many interrelated variables: the goals, the leadership and composition of resistance, the ratio of opponents' forces, terrain, logistics, governments' political will to fight guerrillas, and their counterinsurgency strategies. The obvious comparison of the nationalists with the Red partisans is pointless because their goals, strategies, composition, logistics, and command structures were too different, as were the policies of their enemies. The Red partisans were supplied by airlift, included many regular soldiers, coordinated their actions by radio, and pursued both political and military objectives; they had to raise the population of the occupied territories against the invader, but purely military missions in support of the Red Army, such as interception of enemy supply lines, consumed most of their energy, whereas terror against civilian collaborators was a secondary sphere of their activities. The nationalist guerrillas relied on internal resources, which limited their combat capacity; their recruits were mostly

peasants; their commanders relayed their orders slowly through liaison agents and pursued political goals only,[1] fighting predominantly civilian administrators, militia, those who fit their definition of collaborators, and in some cases, ethnic minorities. The numbers and efficiency of Red partisans grew steadily from the summer of 1942, whereas those of the nationalist groups declined in every region after their peak during the first few months after Soviet reoccupation. However, this fact means little because the policies of the Soviet and German administrations were different; the Red Army boosted the power and morale of the pro-Soviet resistance, and the Central Partisan Headquarters in Moscow increasingly supplied its units with weapons, ammunition, food, specialists, and propaganda materials.

The nationalist guerrillas are best compared with those elsewhere who operated not as an auxiliary to a regular army but as an independent force fighting for power and relying mainly on internal means. The Ukrainian and Lithuanian resistance movements were the strongest. The former was as centralized and controlled its fighters as firmly as a typical Communist guerrilla movement. The Lithuanian resistance was fragmented and had a different nature, strategic objectives, and tactics, but it was as serious an opponent of the Soviets. Like the Filipino, Malayan, or Cuban guerrillas in the 1940–1950s, the nationalists were isolated from outside supplies and political support, but they fought on terrain less suitable for guerrilla warfare, maintained superior infrastructure, and exceeded the Communists in infiltrating the enemy forces and spreading propaganda. Nationalist and Communist insurgents operated in the countryside; therefore, their ability to address peasants' concerns was vital for their survival. While Marxist guerrillas rallied peasants with their promise of a radical agrarian reform, OUN impressed Ukrainians when it dissolved collective farms and divided the lands of exterminated Poles. The Baltic nationalists had no agrarian program, but in this wealthier region, the Soviet land reform hurt a larger proportion of peasants, which helped the nationalists to recruit volunteers.

The nationalist commanders of medium and lower rank were as capable as the Communist commanders, and the motivation and tenacity of their fighters matched those of the Communists after most conscripts and draft evaders deserted. However, the quality of senior nationalist leaders was poor compared with the Communists. The Marxist guerrillas were optimistic, believing time was on their side. Even those groups that eventually were defeated increased their strength for several years after they began operating. The nationalists displayed grim determination rather than optimism. Initially enjoying greater control over the countryside than Communist partisans, they progressively lost it for various reasons, one of which was the decline of popular support caused by nationalist terror. If victims of ethnic cleansing are included, the UPA's violence against civilians exceeded even that of Sendero Luminoso.

[1] Only the UPA made a brief and futile attempt to pursue military objectives in battles against regular Soviet units.

The strategic goals of Communist guerrillas and Ukrainian nationalists were defined by revolutionary ideology, yet the Communists were more flexible in identifying strategic priorities. Acting along the lines set by Mao Tse-Tung, they sought to create a broad coalition against the primary enemy, the regime. In contrast, Ukrainian nationalists first collaborated with the Nazis, who had no plan for an independent Ukrainian state, and then devoted much effort to ethnic cleansing, which affected neither Germany nor Russia, the two major enemies, but forced tens of thousands of anti-Nazi and anti-Soviet Poles to side with the Germans and Soviets against the nationalists. The inclusive strategy of the Communists effectively exploited nationalism to attract those indifferent toward Communist ideals, whereas the exclusionary policy of Ukrainian nationalists needlessly alienated enemies of their primary enemies. Baltic nationalists were less extreme and did not engage in ethnic cleansing after 1941. However, their strategy also was based on wishful thinking, they attacked mostly civilians defined as collaborators, and they could not form coalitions against the Soviets or attract minorities.

Gil Merom observes that "the success of guerrilla warfare depended primarily on the nature of the oppressor and the context of war, rather than on the practical advantages it provided to the oppressed."[2] In other words, the regime's military might, the political will of its leaders, and the pacification policy they chose mattered more for the outcome of the struggle than the combat capacity of guerrillas or their strategy. The Soviet state was a tough opponent. It had a stronger political will than most governments facing Communist guerrillas, it was unconcerned with the casualties its soldiers suffered, it would use any means it regarded as conducive to success, and some of these means, such as deportations of Poles and Germans, elicited a positive response among a large part of the local population. The determination of the regime to impose its power on the borderlands at any cost limited the strategic goal of nationalist guerrillas to banning the Soviet administration from the rural regions until the anticipated liberation by the West would occur. If they are compared with Marxist insurgencies according to the ability to pursue their major strategic objectives in their specific contexts, the Ukrainian and Lithuanian nationalists should be rated as average, much below those of the Chinese, Vietnamese, Cuban, Guatemalan, and Colombian FARC guerrillas, and Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador but roughly equal to those of the Yugoslav partisans, Sendero Luminoso, Greek ELAS, Filipino Hukbalahap, and Malayan Communists and far superior to the anti-Nazi resistance in western Europe. Latvian and Estonian nationalists were less efficient than an average Communist resistance, whereas the capacity of the Polish underground should be assessed in its fight against the Germans rather than the Soviets. Nonetheless, the Soviet counterinsurgents faced a formidable challenge in the western borderlands. How effective was their response?

[2] Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 34.

Pacification is a complicated and nasty business. Thomas Lawrence wrote: "To make war upon rebellion is messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife," whereas Robert Thompson noted sarcastically: "There are only two types of generals in counterinsurgency – those who haven't yet learnt and those who never will!"[3] It is hard to develop an effective counterinsurgency doctrine that can account for the peculiarities of an alien social environment and even harder to enforce the doctrine as prescribed. Most states reduce counterinsurgency to military actions. The army usually plays a primary role in developing the doctrine, and it ignores all pacification aspects but the coercive ones. Quite often the counterinsurgents, in particular those promoting liberal values, are horrified with the outcome of their sincere and vigorous efforts that bring little else but scores of civilian deaths, hatred of the nations they are trying to help, psychological trauma experienced by their own soldiers, and disgust of the domestic public.

Counterinsurgency rarely attains unqualified success, and those who conduct it become an easy target for academics criticizing them with the advantage of hindsight. In fact, the efficiency and rationality of a counterinsurgency policy should be assessed only in comparison with the practice of other states facing similar challenges. Each state fights insurgents in a unique context defined by its social system, the strains experienced by the rebellious regions, the strategy and political culture of the opponents, the terrain, and cultural difference between local people and security forces. Sweeping generalizations about the counterinsurgency policies of states with similar government systems or even the same states in different regions and historical periods are unjustified, and only tentative parallels between their experiences can be made. In order to make these tentative parallels and assess Soviet counterinsurgency in the historical context of the twentieth century, some benchmarks should be chosen – those based on the social systems of the states engaged in pacification rather than on the types of rebellions they faced. Democracies fighting rebels in the Third World from the late 1940s to the 1960s displayed at least some common features in their approach to counterinsurgency, as did patrimonial authoritarianism in Latin America and Southeast Asia.[4] These two groups of social systems and Nazi Germany – the other totalitarian state engaged on the Eastern Front – can serve as benchmarks for evaluating Soviet policy in the borderlands (Table 12.1).

[3] Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 162; T. E. Lawrence, "The Evolution of a Revolt," *Army Quarterly* 1(1):60, 1920.

[4] Jeff Goodwin defines a patrimonial state as that where civil servants and military personnel are appointed and promoted on the basis of personal loyalty to a leader, kinship, and ethnicity rather than merit. Most such states are infrastrucrturally weak, exclusionary, antireformist, and indiscriminately repressive; Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945–1991* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 11, 143.

TABLE 12.1 *Soviet Counterinsurgency from a Comparative Perspective (+ = Similarity; – = dissimilarity; ± = some similarity)*

Soviet Regime	Democracies in the Third World	Patrimonial Authoritarianism (Latin America and Southeast Asia)	Nazis in Occupied Slavic Lands
Context			
Strong political will	–	–	+
No impact of public opinion	–	+	+
No sensitivity to own casualties	–	+	+
Limited concern about civilian casualties	+	–	–
Great leverage of the center on the local agencies	–	–	+
Free choice of means	–	+	+
Cataclysmic external conflict during pacification	–	–	+
Pacification Policy			
Centralized strategy	–	–	–
Small gap between strategy and its implementation	–	±	±
Insurgency and counterinsurgency perceived as forms of class struggle	–	–	–
Revolutionary experience > primary strategic objective: social revolution from above	–	–	–
Doctrinal primacy of reforms over coercion	+	–	–
Radicalism of the reforms	–	–	–
Goals of the reforms: split the society along class lines and provoke class struggle	–	–	–
No reliance on local elites	–	–	+

Soviet Regime	Democracies in the Third World	Patrimonial Authoritarianism (Latin America and Southeast Asia)	Nazis in Occupied Slavic Lands
Ideological determinism > disregard of local conditions	+	–	+
Underestimation of nationalism as a motivation of insurgents	+	–	+
Use of deportations and other types of forced migration as a primary counterinsurgency means	+	–	–
Amnesties	+	+	–
Primary role of the local militia: internalization of conflict	±	±	–
No use of heavy weapons	–	–	–
Frantic effort to acquire intelligence on insurgents	+	–	–
Torture as a method of intelligence acquisition	+	+	+
Wide employment of covert operations	+	–	–
Intimidation by public executions	–	+	+
Licence to violate the law within limits	–	+	+
Arbitrary justice for those violating the law	±	+	–

How did Soviet pacification compare with the policies of other states? Five factors set it apart. First, the Stalinist regime possessed a number of unique features that shaped its approach to the security problems. Second, Soviet doctrine stemmed from a single agency, the Communist party. Third, this doctrine was based on a quasi-Marxist ideology. Fourth, it leaned on the experience gained in the Revolution and the civil war. And finally, the counterinsurgency campaign began at the end of a devastating war in which the existence of the Soviet Union was at stake. Because of the latter, pacification of the borderlands was the top priority of the governments in the western republics but not of the center. During the war, Moscow was busy fighting the Axis, and the impact of the resistance on the Soviet war effort was slight, whereas after the war, the Soviet regime regarded the consolidation of communism in eastern Europe and restoration of the economy in the old territories as more important matters. The overall control over the western republics was never at risk; the regime's authority in towns was indisputable. While the government became even less scrupulous in the choice of means under the impact of the war, it opted to suppress insurgency with limited military resources in part because it hoped to solve some problems by political means and in part because it needed manpower elsewhere. It allocated proportionately smaller forces to antiguerrilla operations than many other counterinsurgents, but it could replenish them as long as was necessary.[5]

Soviet strategy was more centralized than that of other states. The Nazi counterinsurgency was chaotic, with Hitler, OKW, OKH, SS, and *Ostministerium* all refraining from articulating a policy toward partisans, suspects, and civilians in rebellious regions but issuing instead spontaneous, ambiguous, and contradictory orders. Commanders of the security units had to act on their own discretion. Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, SS chief of antipartisan units and a notorious war criminal, explained why the Nazi leaders failed to issue clear instructions: "This lack of direction in responsible quarters is a cowardly devolution of responsibility onto lower echelons. But if it is obvious to everyone that lack of direction leads to a chaos of reprisals and nevertheless

[5] The French forces in Algeria swelled from 80,000 to 400,000 men in 1955–1956. The forces of counterinsurgents in Vietnam included half a million Americans, a dozen divisions of South Vietnamese and their allies, and a host of paramilitaries; Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars,* p. 100; Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1977), p. 93. The Soviets kept the largest security forces in western Ukraine; in August 1946, the police there had at its disposal a few thousand district policemen and 34,000 MVD troops aided by approximately the same number of local militia; Colonel Saraev to Leont'ev, "Doklad o sostoianii i deiatel'nosti istrebitel'nykh batal'onov [Report on condition and actions of destruction battalions]" (27 September 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 82; Kruglov to Beria (August 1946), GARF, f. 9478, op. 1, d. 562, l. 35. Several regular Red Army divisions also were located in western Ukraine, but they rarely took part in counterinsurgency. The population of western Ukraine equaled 70 percent the Algerian population and about 30 percent of the population of South Vietnam.

no clear orders are given, then the only possible conclusion is that this chaos is intended by the leaders at the top."[6]

Few authoritarian regimes in Latin America and Southeast Asia bothered to articulate a counterinsurgency doctrine. Since dictators were concerned with their own rather than national interests, they deliberately created numerous competing security agencies with poorly defined responsibilities and overlapping authority in the hope that such a chaotic structure and interservice rivalry would doom probable coup attempts by the security forces. Ngo Dinh Diem, dictator of South Vietnam between 1955 and 1963, created 10 separate intelligence agencies, none of which communicated with the others and all of which spied mainly on one another rather than on insurgents.[7] Furthermore, seeking to strengthen their own position, dictators have divided conservative elites and instigated quarrels among various cliques, thus weakening the counterrevolutionary front.

Democracies have spared no effort in developing rational pacification policies, but their campaigns have been marred by a great gap between intent and practice caused by insufficient coordination among civilian, military, and police agencies; the inability of policymakers to impose their strategies on the armed forces that fought insurgency as they pleased; and limited leverage on local governments. During the Vietnam War, the strong air force faction within the U.S. military promoted the bombing of villages suspected of sheltering guerrillas. This action was seen as a panacea: "It was in the personal interest of the Air Force chief and of his institution to believe that the bombing furthered the war effort, and so he believed it,"[8] although the civilian agencies planning pacification regarded this approach as counterproductive. Even if Western military and civilian counterinsurgents acted in unison, local governments ignored their advice to eliminate corruption and nepotism, make their regimes more representative, rationalize their security agencies, and undertake social reforms vital for the success of pacification.

In the Soviet case, the gap between intent and practice was smaller because the Communist party alone planned and supervised pacification, whereas the security forces offered tactical means to attain strategic objectives set by the party. In January 1947, all security units were transferred from MVD to MGB, and those who had fought rebels since 1944 suddenly found themselves under new superiors who had their own ideas about how to conduct pacification. This development, however, affected only tactics but not strategy, which remained the party's domain. Even in the Baltic region, the central government had more leverage over local administrators than did Western states conducting counterinsurgency in the Third

[6] Matthew Cooper, *The Phantom War* (London: Macdonald & Jane's, 1979), p. 57.

[7] D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 255.

[8] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 166.

World.[9] The party closely monitored antiguerrilla operations, ensured that they corresponded to doctrine, and coordinated the aims and means of the civilian administration and the police. This secured the integrity of political and military strategies. Most often Soviet counterinsurgency was practiced as it was preached. This did not guarantee optimal pacification because some basic assumptions of that doctrine were wrong. Communist ideology and the totalitarian state system made Soviet policy more coherent but also more rigid than those of most states fighting insurgency.

Ideally, any state conducting counterinsurgency should analyze the nature of unrest and then develop a recipe for its quelling. The Communist party had lost its strategic flexibility under Stalin, its ideology having petrified after the purges. Punishment for questioning the party line was so brutal and swift that those who survived the Great Terror never dared to adjust it, even if its lack of fit was proven repeatedly in practice. Such an attitude limited learning from experience. Soviet counterinsurgents showed much imagination and ingenuity in refining their tactics in response to reports from the field because theories played a less important role in tactical matters. However, experience barely affected the pacification strategy because at that level of policymaking, ideology killed analysis. Although Stalinists believed that in counterinsurgency, politics should prevail over military actions, they were unable to undertake as effective a discharge of rebellious potential through political means as the early Bolsheviks did when they launched the New Economic Policy. Instead, they adopted a simplistic and standard pacification model that presumed uniformity of the driving forces behind insurgency and prescribed universal solutions. The model was based not on analysis of the social and political situation in every region but on general postulates and the mechanical application of previous experience to different social conditions. If some of these postulates incidentally corresponded to the situation in the borderlands, the theories helped the Soviets to articulate their policy and pursue their goals. If, however, the situation was at odds with the theories, the counterinsurgents nevertheless stubbornly stuck to them. The class theory helped the Soviets to effectively exploit agrarian tensions in the borderlands and fearlessly rely on "class allies" in an alien social environment. Yet the Stalinist aspect of the theory, "intensification of class struggle during the advance of socialism," made the party overrate the class factors of conflict and underestimate the ability of insurgency leaders to rally peasants who resented the Soviet regime under a nationalist banner. The party recognized nationalism as one of the rebellion's causes but portrayed nationalists merely as German pawns in its propaganda and succumbed to its own rhetoric. It believed that with the defeat of Germany, the class factor had become the dominant driving force of the resistance. Accordingly, the government fought the unrest by repressing not

[9] The problems with leverage experienced by American counterinsurgents are described in Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 119, 188, 223, 251–254; Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 86, 103.

only those actively resisting it but also "class enemies," the urban and rural bourgeoisie, because it thought class affiliation would prompt them to oppose Soviet authority, and in any case, their elimination was necessary. The sweeping repressions on a class basis fueled the rebellion.

To be sure, the Nazis and the democracies displayed an ideological determinism similar to the Soviet one, which equally damaged their policies. They also underestimated nationalism as a cause for unrest, attributing it in the first case to Jewish conspiracy and in the second to the social strain caused by the transition from a traditional to a modern society.[10] Like the Soviets, democracies created their models on the basis of abstract ideas irrelevant to the situation on the ground. The American belief that counterinsurgency, if managed correctly, can succeed anywhere was as absurd as the expectation of the early Bolsheviks that the Russian Revolution would inevitably spark a worldwide proletarian revolution. The perception of Marxist guerrillas in the Third World as the hand of Moscow, the domino-effect theory that led to the American involvement in Vietnam, or the French view that insurgencies in Algeria and Indochina were of a similar nature[11] had as poor foundations as the Soviet interpretation of resistance roots in the borderlands.

All these counterinsurgents searched for master-key solutions, ignoring the local conditions and the evidence that contradicted their assumptions. They often misunderstood the nature of the rebellions they were fighting, and they viewed themselves as managers of natural historical processes, which hindered the analysis. The Soviets followed what they thought was the only correct theory on earth that predicted the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie through physical destruction of the latter. The Nazis cleared the *Lebensraum* for the *Herrenvolk* and conducted counterinsurgency with the view that the majority of Slavs had to be exterminated or deported, whatever their attitude toward the Communists or the invaders. The pacification doctrines of democracies adopted a political development theory stating that all countries were bound to take the Western path sooner or later and the spread of government and social institutions like their own was inevitable. Subsequently, those counterinsurgents engaged confidently in what they called "nation building" in rebellious societies whose mentality they did not understand and attempted to enforce the "normal growth curve" despite abundant evidence suggesting that their assumptions were wrong. Westerners believed in their civilizing mission but supported military authoritarianism as a temporary solution because they perceived armed forces as the most progressive component of Third World societies and an antidote to Communist subversion.[12] They often followed the allegedly *Realpolitik* principle expressed by Franklin Roosevelt – "Somoza may be a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch" – and then, after realizing

[10] Ben Shepherd, *War in the Wild East* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 56, 88, 89, Goodwin, *No Other Way Out,* pp. 17–19.
[11] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms,* pp. 6, 68, 69, 152.
[12] Ibid., pp. 59, 64, 69, 111, 136, 281.

that they would get nowhere by supporting such corrupt, violent, and uncontrollable protégés, wondered how to get rid of them.

Ideology and theoretical dogma often frustrated analysis in Western counterinsurgency but prompted political action. Michael Shafer showed the ideological utility of theoretical concepts during the Vietnam War: "Political development theory offered a vision of the United States' place in history based not on might but on right."[13] After the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001, the U.S. National Security Council maintained that "Iraq is the central front in the global war on terror,"[14] ignoring the fact that this country had been terrorist-free before the invasion and asserting instead that "Helping the people of Iraq is the morally right thing to do."[15] The Democratic Peace Theory, which presumes that democracies never fight each other, served to justify the invasion. Counterinsurgency in Iraq was presented to the American public as a crusade for democratization of the oil-rich regions that would bring them eternal peace and thus serve the vital interests of the United States. The belief that the imposition of democracy from above would make Iraqis fans of liberal values and the United States was a cornerstone of American strategy. In fact, in a self-fulfilling prophecy, the U.S. invasion turned Iraq from a terrorist-free country into a training ground for Islamic revolutionaries, exactly as the Soviet counterinsurgency turned apathetic wealthier peasants into bitter anti-Communists.

The different natures of ideological determinism, however, dictate different policies. The Nazis and patrimonial dictators eschewed reforms that could undermine the insurgency; the former thought that the master race could keep the conquered nations subdued by brute force alone, whereas the latter owned too much property and were too engaged with local *caudillos* to think about a redistribution of assets. The counterinsurgents from democratic states believed that rational doctrine should combine coercion aimed at manifestations of unrest with reforms targeting its roots. These reforms intended to promote democratization of local social systems and also turn an unhappy tenant peasant or a *latifundia* worker – losers of the modernization process responsive to revolutionary appeals – into conservative landowners. The primary strategic objective of all these counterinsurgents was stabilization. Counterinsurgency equaled counterrevolution, whether through reactionary, military, or liberal means, an attempt to forestall a popular upheaval, to restore a status quo upset by popular resistance. Democracies and, especially, patrimonial regimes relied on conservative rural elites regarding them as the social group most suitable to solidify society against the insurgents.

The Soviets took an opposite approach. Firsthand experience in insurgency helped them to realize that political victory mattered more in such conflicts

[13] Ibid., p. 65.
[14] National Security Council, *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* (November 2005), pp. 1, 3.
[15] Ibid., p. 4.

than success on the battlefield. However, in the borderlands, reforms could not target the roots of the unrest, which, in essence, were rejection of the Soviet social system. Instead, the Communists sought to counter instability created by insurgency with another instability, a social revolution from above intended to split rural society along class lines and force its beneficiaries to side with the state while eliminating class enemies along with all potential opponents. The cornerstone of this doctrine, deliberate destabilization of the countryside and instigation of class struggle in the pursuit of political objectives, stemmed from the revolutionary past, which no other counterinsurgent had had. This was a unique element of Soviet pacification.

Reforms were equally important in doctrines of the Soviet and Western counterinsurgents, but not in their practice, and the nature of their reforms was different. Westerners believed that unrest came from poverty and that Communists, scavengers of the modernization process, exploited the social strain such process produced. Accordingly, they suggested reforms that were to create conditions for economic progress, eliminate poverty in the long run, even without a major redistribution of property, and thus stabilize these societies.

Only grave problems provoke armed resistance; therefore, only radical reforms can undermine it. Few governments sponsored by Western counterinsurgents launched such reforms because they contradicted the interests of ruling elites on which they relied. Few top political leaders among the protégés of Westerners put national interests above personal ones. Usually Westerners have had to deal with selfish, corrupt, and tyrannical personalities like Chiang Kai-shek in China, Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua, Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, Marcos Pérez Jiménez in Venezuela, Fulgensio Batista in Cuba, Lon Nol in Cambodia, and Ngo Dinh Diem and Nguyen Van Thieu in Vietnam. These leaders resisted any change of social policy. Agrarian reform played a negligible role during counterinsurgency in Vietnam. Peasants there were concerned mainly with land redistribution, and the material help that the Americans gave them in the form of lump payments paled against the background of the Communist radical agrarian policy. These feeble attempts to win peasants over were no more effective as a public relations exercise than was Rosenberg's land reform in the occupied Soviet areas. Even in Malaya and the Philippines, where the governments eventually made a serious effort to discharge the revolutionary potential through attractive social policies, their reforms were rather cosmetic and proceeded slower than the agrarian reform enforced by the Soviets.[16]

This happened not only because the local elites resisted the suggested reforms but also because most governments among those willing to launch them pursued long-lasting economic and social effects, for which they needed thorough planning, capital investments, solid infrastructure, and security.

[16] Goodwin, *No Other Way Out,* pp. 119, 120.

However, the economies of these Third World states, usually weak, were further undermined by insurgencies, and funds available for reforms were scarce. It took these governments a long time to prepare these reforms. They could not attain sufficient security in rebellious regions until they attracted some people, which they could not do because guerrillas paralyzed the local administrations tasked to promote the policy of the center. In the years that passed from the decision to launch reforms until their start, the governments relied on force alone, alienating peasants to such a degree that the reforms became irrelevant by the time they began. The phrase of Charles Colson, Richard Nixon's advisor, "When you have them by the balls, their hearts and minds will follow"[17] was probably an outcome of frustration rather than a policy guideline.

The Soviets broke this vicious circle. Soviet pacification doctrine emphasized the social reforms over military aspects of counterinsurgency, and the Communist party ensured that it did not remain an empty policy statement, as so often happened elsewhere, but a manual for action. Radical agrarian reform, the cornerstone of the Soviet fight for peasants' hearts, intended to attract supporters and gain victory through class confrontation. In the countryside, Ernesto Guevara wrote, "The struggle of the people for reforms is aimed primarily and almost exclusively at changing the social form of land ownership; [therefore] the guerrilla fighter is above all an agrarian revolutionary."[18] Paradoxically, in the borderlands, it was the Soviet counterinsurgents who were agrarian revolutionaries. They fought conservative peasants, some of whom were led by another type of revolutionaries, nationalist ones.

The Soviets announced the agrarian reform immediately after they reoccupied the borderlands and thus attracted enough peasants to begin it. The reform's major aspect was the sweeping redistribution of property. This impressive but temporary measure intended not to improve the living standard of peasants in the long run but only to gain their support during the crucial period of power struggle, after which the Communists planned to drive them to collective farms. Such a reform did not need to be orderly or sophisticated. Reforms suggested by Westerners were meant to be economically progressive. The Soviet reform was reactionary. It had no economic rationale; in fact, the government knew it would undermine agricultural production but thought this less important for the moment than popular support. The state needed no complex administrative infrastructure or great capital investment to accomplish such a reform. It had to provide only minimal protection to rural authorities, but that threshold of security was lower than in other countries. The government forced its officials to work in a dangerous environment, which civil servants elsewhere would regard as unacceptable. Khrushchev merely mocked one of many local administrators horrified by guerrilla terrorism, saying, "He is so scared that his hair stands

[17] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War,* p. 115.
[18] Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), p. 51.

on even though he's bald,"[19] and sent him back to his region. He and all other top Soviet leaders viewed the great casualties inflicted by the guerrillas as a regrettable but inevitable outcome of a natural historical process – class struggle. This approach allowed the Soviets to conduct reforms simultaneously with counterinsurgency campaigns, which facilitated pacification. The Soviets could offer peasants little beyond redistribution of land, free health care and better education systems, an opportunity for upward social mobility, and in the case of western Belorussia and western Ukraine, limited promotion of local ethnic culture. Yet no other counterinsurgent addressed the agrarian problems, the most important issue for a rural society, more vigorously than Soviet Communists. The reform exacerbated agrarian tensions and brought the state many more allies than enemies. The strategy of social revolution from above, the *Schwerpunkt* of Soviet pacification, was ruthless and effective.

It also was a cynical strategy, yet some of its key aspects were prompted by ideology. While agrarian reform was the most successful political means to pacify rebellious regions, its effect was undermined by another agrarian policy, collectivization. The rush to collectivization in 1940–1941 and the futile attempts to resume it in western Ukraine in 1944 in the midst of counterinsurgency operations produced more damage to pacification than any other policy. On balance, however, the Soviets succeeded in attracting a crucial mass of the population to their side.

Along with the agrarian reform, the Soviets used deportations and amnesties, and they intensively recruited local militia to pacify the borderlands. Most other states also did so, but the Soviet version of these pacification tools had some unique features stemming from ideology, the nature of the state, and previous experience. How effectively did the Soviets use these means, and what were the peculiarities of their Soviet brand? Any state fighting armed resistance has two primary targets: the guerrillas and their civilian sympathizers. Since it is hard to pinpoint the former, coercion of the latter is inevitably a large component of counterinsurgency. Ideally, a government should process intelligence information and arrest suspects on its basis. If it has no such information, it either conducts general repressions in rebellious regions or arrests those it believes are the most probable members of insurgent infrastructure. The goal is to eliminate the active supporters of the guerrillas and to keep the passive ones from helping them and thus to deprive insurgents of supplies, intelligence, and potential recruits. The basic principle of the Stalinist repressive policy – "One cannot cut a tree without producing chips" (*les rubiat – shchepki letiat*)[20] – recognized that many innocent people would fall victim, but even so, the Soviets selected their targets more accurately than did the Nazis and most authoritarian regimes. After all, "political actors are

[19] William Taubman, *Khrushchev* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), p. 195.

[20] The English equivalent of this proverb favored by Stalin is, "One cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs."

successful in generating deterrence via selective violence *in spite* of killing many innocent people. … To achieve deterrence, political actors … need to cultivate [in the targeted population] a *perception of credible selection,*"[21] and the Soviet actions did create such a perception. Democracies sought to be far more precise in their coercion, but this ideal often could not be attained in practice.

All types of states deported people of uncertain loyalty from regions threatened by a foreign enemy or insurgents. In Merom's words, "From the perspective of unscrupulous oppressors, the removal of the popular base of insurrection or the destruction of the national identity of subjugated peoples are simple and cost-effective measures."[22] The goals, selection criteria, and role of deportations in counterinsurgency policy depended on the nature of the state. Only the Soviets used a class criterion in picking their victims, which resulted in an automatic targeting of those who fit the stereotype of class enemy. The sweeping deportations of "hostile classes" stemming from this philosophy were almost as embracing as those conducted on an ethnic basis in the Soviet Union and elsewhere and included not only those suspected of sympathy with guerrillas but also most members of the blacklisted groups. They eliminated many active and potential enemies of the regime but also created many new ones among those who would have accepted the authorities passively if left with options other than deportation. The merging of two conflicting policies, pacification and collectivization, turned the social composition of the resistance into what the Communists had expected it to be from the beginning and prolonged insurgency for several years. This eventual composition was the result of repression, not its cause. The paradigm thus constructed reality. Other Soviet deportations and similar methods of removing potential opponents from rebellious regions were no less brutal but were a more effective means of pacification. The exchange of diaspora populations, small-scale retaliative deportations, and the exile of *osadniks* and guerrilla families helped the government to attain its objectives. The victims were expelled abroad or moved to territories populated by loyalists, where their opposition to the authorities was unimportant.

How did deportations elsewhere compare with the Soviet ones? The Nazis believed that it was easier to kill people in rebellious regions than to relocate them. Deportations in the framework of counterinsurgency were much smaller than those conducted for other purposes, and they were disastrously counterproductive. Such measures as burning villages within 30 kilometers of the railways without providing other accommodation to the evicted only drove people to the partisans. Military dictators also typically believed that it was cheaper to kill civilians in rebellious regions than to move them out. Soviet decision making in the western borderlands on the eve of the German attack hardly differed from that of democracies in similar circumstances.

[21] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War,* p. 190 (emphasis in original).
[22] Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars,* p. 45.

Soviet leaders showed more restraint in the face of greater menace and more precision in repressions in the borderlands than did the American and Canadian governments when they interned all their citizens of Japanese descent deported from the Pacific coast during World War II. Democracies often evacuated the population out of areas with guerrilla activities, but this measure usually brought mixed results. The resettlement of Chinese squatters by the British in Malaya, accompanied by a serious investment in the rural infrastructure, probably was the only clear-cut success, although the number of deportees, 600,000 people, exceeded the number of people exiled by the Soviets after the reoccupation of the borderlands, if "repatriations" are excluded.[23] Earlier British deportations during the Boer War can hardly be qualified as a success: Although the internment of Boer civilians in concentration camps helped to suppress insurgency, about 16 percent of the inmates died within one year, which was double the death rate of the worst Soviet deportations from the North Caucasus in 1944. In order to deprive Boer guerrillas of supplies, the British laid waste their countryside. The Soviets never used this tactic in counterinsurgency, and the number of houses their soldiers burned selectively was a small fraction of the 30,000 farms destroyed by the British.[24] The relocation of peasants to strategic hamlets by the South Vietnamese government on American advice barely differed in brutality from Soviet practice, but the failure to move the embittered farmers far enough from the threatened regions ensured that subversion continued. The French deportations in Algeria were greater in scale and proportion of the affected people than those in the western borderlands: The French resettled 11 to 12 percent of all Moslem Algerians, or 1 million people, into protected camps. These deportations were less discriminate than the Soviet ones: If a soldier was killed in a village, its entire population was deported and the village destroyed. However, the French deportations, unlike the Soviet ones, did not eliminate the rebellious potential of the exiles: The protected camps were located in the same regions, and the miserable conditions there bred new rebels.[25] As a whole, the Soviets were more pragmatic in coercing civilians in rebellious areas than either the Nazis or military authoritarian regimes and probably were more discriminate than democracies. The latter usually inflicted lesser privations on their victims than the Soviets, but they were rarely as effective in attaining their goals.

[23] John Coates, *Suppressing Insurgency: An Analysis of the Malayan Emergency, 1948–1954* (Oxford, England: Westview Press, 1992), p. 92; James Hughes, *Chechnya* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p. 116.

[24] Byron Farwell, *The Great Boer War* (London: Penguin, 1977), pp. 353, 408.

[25] On the French, British, and South Vietnamese deportations, see Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars,* p. 95; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms,* pp. 157, 266–268; Caroline Elkin, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenia* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), p. xiii; Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace* (London: Papermac, 1996), pp. 114, 221; Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era,* pp. 114, 123; Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 68.

Most counterinsurgents attempted to drain guerrilla manpower through amnesties. The more precisely reforms targeted the roots of unrest, the lesser coercion was needed to persuade the unenthusiastic part of the guerrilla force to surrender. If the reforms were unimpressive, the states still could force rebels to accept amnesty by intensifying repressions, but only up to a certain level, above which they became counterproductive. Soviet analysts, viewing their opponents not as a homogeneous force but as a composition of classes with conflicting interests, put more effort than many other counterinsurgents into attempts to detach peasant fighters from the guerrilla hard core. Such a perception, along with freedom in choosing coercive means, allowed the Soviets to maintain an effective balance between clemency and ruthlessness. They gave guerrillas an opportunity to return home and simultaneously demonstrated that if they failed to obey, neither they nor their families would be spared. Soviet amnesties were more effective in depleting guerrilla manpower than those declared by the Nazis[26] and the South Vietnamese regime, although the governments of the Philippines and Malaya attained as good a balance between persuasion and coercion as did the Soviets. Pardons of political opponents were traditionally an important part of Latin American political culture. Sometimes amnesties declared by democratic governments, such as the administrations of Acción Democrática in Venezuela in the 1960s and 1970s or the Mexican government in 1990s, effectively devastated the resistance. Yet the Soviet amnesties were far more successful than those sporadically attempted by typical Caribbean-type authoritarian regimes.

The Soviet regime assigned more importance to the volunteer militia than did counterinsurgents elsewhere. Western counterinsurgents raised paramilitaries primarily because their regular security units were overstretched. They also thought that a paramilitary force would help them involve local populations in struggle on their side, but this was a secondary consideration in the decision to organize it. This is why they were so frustrated when they found that the militia was unreliable and could not match the guerrillas in combat. Latin American regimes consciously used militia to internalize the social conflict, as did, for instance, the Peruvian government when it established *rondas campesinas* that effectively banned Sendero Luminoso from the regions it considered its bases.[27] However, most Latin American governments could not control the paramilitaries, giving them instead a carte blanche in fighting guerrilla sympathizers, which in practice resulted in indiscriminate slaughter of civilians and an intensification of turmoil. Such militias were often effective weapons against guerrillas, but their actions undermined the primary

[26] The German security forces initially had orders to execute all Soviet partisans, no matter whether they were captured in battle or surrendered voluntarily. In the summer of 1942, the Germans began promising to spare partisans if they surrendered, but only in May 1944 did OKW issue a clear directive stating that captured fighters should be regarded as POWs; Cooper, *The Phantom War,* pp. 106, 107.

[27] Lewis Taylor, *Shining Path* (Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press, 2006), pp. 33–35.

strategic goal of the counterinsurgents – stabilization of the rebellious regions. The Soviet security agencies controlled their militia more effectively, and they welcomed destabilization. They viewed the typical militia flaws as a fair price for its utility in fomenting class conflict and the transformation of pacification from a political confrontation between state and local population into a civil war. Furthermore, the militia's protection enabled the rural administration to launch agrarian reform, which was central to the Soviet pacification effort. The Soviet paramilitaries advanced the government goals despite their poor efficiency.

Most tactical police methods employed by the Soviets were used by other states as well. As Lawrence pointed out, 2 percent of those fomenting rebellions are activists, and the remaining 98 percent are passively sympathetic; therefore, intelligence is vital to make pacification rational because it limits repressions and focuses them on the activists.[28] The Soviet counterinsurgents valued intelligence as much as Westerners did and were as inventive in acquiring it. They had more experience than Westerners in some aspects of intelligence collection, such as in operating a vast informer network, because the Soviet police routinely ran it in their own state even in times of peace. Moreover, Soviet security agencies could gather information by methods unavailable to those promoting liberal values. To be sure, the French in Algeria and the Americans in their post-2001 counterinsurgency campaigns also have kept people imprisoned for years without charging them and have tortured prisoners, and these were government-endorsed policies. General Jacques Massu, chief counterinsurgent in Algeria, believed torture brought results and approved it, after which his subordinates widely practiced water boarding and electric shock during interrogations. Water boarding, perceived by the Soviet prosecutors – at least during the periodical antitorture campaigns – as a flagrant violation of the law,[29] became a standard interrogation method used by the CIA during the administration of George W. Bush. Other types of torture applied to suspect Islamic revolutionaries in third countries on CIA orders were perhaps as brutal as the techniques used by Soviet interrogators in the borderlands. However, the Soviets still encountered fewer formal obstacles to using third-degree methods than democracies faced, and if the police believed these methods to be conducive to success in certain situations, exceptions to the official policy were granted easily at every level of administration. The German counterinsurgents and most authoritarian regimes infiltrated urban resistance as effectively, but they rarely undertook the far greater effort needed to penetrate rural rebel structures, preferring to rely on indiscriminate repressions. Freedom in the choice of means, unavailable to Westerners, coupled with the understanding

[28] Hughes, *Chechnya,* p. 115.

[29] Shelestov, acting military prosecutor of the MGB Frontier Guard Troops, "Dokladnaia zapiska o narusheniiakh sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti rabotnikami MGB [Report on violation of socialist legality by MGB officers]" (1952), TsDIAL, f. 3, op. 4, d. 512, l. 125; Horne, *A Savage War of Peace,* pp. 197–204.

that investment into intelligence acquisition paid off, let the Soviets accumulate a large volume of information useful in the struggle against fragmented insurgency. Western intelligence agencies often acknowledged the superiority of their Soviet counterparts in the sphere of human intelligence. The conversion of Markulis in Lithuania was a success eclipsing the recruitment of Loi Tek, secretary general of the Malayan Communist party, by the British during the Malayan Emergency because Loi Tek had defected before the beginning of the armed resistance, whereas Markulis was a high-ranking leader through most of the guerrilla war in Lithuania. Finally, Westerners fighting rural insurgency in alien environments rarely exceeded the scale and efficiency of covert operations conducted by Soviets in the borderlands.

Correct interpretation of information is equally vital for policy planning. The Soviet security agencies used intelligence effectively at the tactical level when they targeted certain guerrilla units or leaders of the resistance. However, during the flow of information from the bottom up, ideological factors played an increasingly important role in its interpretation. Intelligence was further distorted by eyewash and overoptimistic reports at every stage of Soviet bureaucracy that filtered away the data contradicting the superiors' expectations. Medium-level leaders downplayed the popular opposition to the Soviet regime because Stalinist theory could not explain it, but the police inflated the scale of engagements with guerrillas and the body count in order to avert accusations of incompetence and to cover up murders of bystanders. Since their party superiors knew the number of civilians who joined the guerrillas after the census of the population, the exaggerated police claims suggested that insurgents retained little manpower. However, the resistance showed no corresponding decline, which puzzled pacification strategists. The top Soviet leaders received intelligence polluted by ideology and deliberate lies. In turn, they themselves ignored data conflicting with the ideological postulates. Subsequently, they developed counterinsurgency strategy on the basis of misinformation and ideological paradigms. At the tactical level, police fought guerrillas regardless of their social origin; for them, any armed rebel was an enemy. However, it was the party who defined counterinsurgency strategy, and for the Communists, the class principle was the cornerstone in decision making. The effective use of intelligence in police tactics did not compensate for mistakes in strategy stemming from the wrong perception of the overall situation in the borderlands by top Soviet leaders. The abundant intelligence contradicting this perception made no impact on strategy. Underestimation of the opposition to the regime, interpretation of resistance as a class war, and failure to thwart the random violence of Soviet soldiers were costly strategic blunders that occurred because rosy reports, ideological preconceptions, and cover-up distorted the situation in the borderlands.

Most counterinsurgents fought guerrillas with their regular armed forces trained to destroy the opponent with all available means. Since it was hard to identify guerrillas among the civilians, the latter inevitably became the primary victims of counterinsurgency operations. Top Nazi leaders actually

encouraged indiscriminate repressions in partisan-infested regions. An OKW instruction signed by Field Marshall Wilhelm Keitel cited Hitler's order:

> If the repression of the bands in the east, as well as in the Balkans, is not pursued with the most brutal means, it will not be long before the forces at our disposal will prove insufficient to exterminate this plague. The troops therefore have the right and the duty to use, in this fight, any means, even against women and children, provided they are conducive to success. Scruples, of any sort whatsoever, are a crime against the German people and against the front-line soldier. … No German participating in actions against bands or their associates is to be held responsible for acts of violence either from a disciplinary or a judicial point of view.[30]

Bach-Zelewski admitted that the Nazi "fight against partisans was gradually used as an excuse to carry out other measures, such as the extermination of Jews and Gypsies, the systematic reduction of the Slavic peoples by some 30,000,000 souls (in order to ensure the supremacy of the German people), and the terrorization of civilians by shooting and looting."[31] Patrimonial authoritarian regimes pursued less sweeping goals, but they had no moral constraints either, nor did they experience the pressure of public opinion or peace movements. Their repressive policy often was as indiscriminate as that of the Nazis: The U.S.-sponsored campaign against Marxist guerrillas in Guatemala in the 1980s and 1990s cost 200,000 lives – many more than the number of deaths inflicted by the Soviet counterinsurgency during the entire campaign in the borderlands, an area twice as populous.[32]

Democracies sought to limit civilian casualties, but "an overriding consideration in the use of indiscriminate violence is the cost of selective violence." Furthermore, "while selective and careful counterinsurgency is more costly than other pacification strategies, it does not eliminate the need to rely on extreme violence. … The chances are that a less selective use of violence will cut the costs and reduce the time of planning and executing each of the strategies of pacification."[33] Generals of all armies subscribed to this philosophy. Democratic governments attempted to overcome this mentality, but their military subordinates refused to abandon the sophisticated conventional military doctrine that relied on the concentration of forces at a decisive point, overwhelming firepower, high technology, and precise coordination of arms; they also refused to adjust their training, organization, equipment, and mentality to low-intensity, tactically primitive, decentralized, and unspectacular counterinsurgency warfare. American military advisors picked from regular army units and trained to fight conventional war taught the South Vietnamese Army, whose primary enemy were insurgents, and their rotation period was too short to give them the opportunity to learn the tactical peculiarities of the

[30] Cooper, *The Phantom War,* p. 81.
[31] Ibid., p. 57.
[32] Goodwin, *No Other Way Out,* p. 145.
[33] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War,* p. 165; Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars,* p. 46.

Vietnam War.[34] American commanders viewed counterinsurgency merely as a limited conventional war; they believed "the solution in Vietnam is more bombs, more shells, more napalm … till the other side cracks and gives up" and inflicted enormous "collateral damage," which irreparably damaged relations with people of the pacified regions.[35] The United States could keep fighting in Vietnam as long as its casualties were low. The pursuit of guerrillas in areas inaccessible to heavy weapons inevitably increased the casualties. By obliterating suspected guerrilla enclaves with artillery barrage and aerial bombardment, the U.S. forces minimized losses but also prompted embittered peasants to join the National Liberation Front in numbers that compensated for its battle attrition.

The Soviet regime was fighting insurgency on its own soil, and it could not afford such tactics. It always kept in mind that many of the civilians supporting the guerrillas were misguided class allies who had to be won over. This assumption and the indifference to their own casualties made the Soviets employ against insurgents not regular army but special NKVD units that had no heavy weapons and were taught how to fight insurgents. Their training was far from perfect, but they did not practice blasting villages suspected of sympathy to resistance by artillery or air force. Although Soviet repressions were imprecise, the troops killed those whom they wanted to kill for reasons they believed to be sufficient, whereas the Americans in Vietnam inflicted unintended civilian deaths in numbers far exceeding the victims of Soviet deliberate brutality. Other Westerners also have fought rebellions in the Third World predominantly with regular units trained to fight conventional war, with predictable consequences for civilians, although most used heavy weapons cautiously. The top French counterinsurgents turned a blind eye to torture and other brutal antiguerrilla methods practiced by the army more willingly than did the top American ones, but they rarely employed heavy artillery or bombers against suspected resistance enclaves and therefore inflicted less "collateral damage."[36]

Governments fighting guerrillas typically prefer focused repressions to chaotic ones, with democracies concerned about unauthorized violence most and military dictatorships least. The Nazis were a special case: They perpetrated more atrocities against civilians than other counterinsurgents, but these were sanctioned by the top political leaders or military commanders. An OKW

[34] Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War,* p. 166.

[35] Ibid., p. 166; Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era,* pp. 80, 81; Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam,* pp. 68, 259, 260, 268.

[36] According to conservative estimates, the pacification of Algeria cost 140,000 lives of the approximately 10 million Moslems; Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars,* p. 87. This was far fewer casualties in both absolute numbers and per capita than those inflicted by counterinsurgents in Vietnam. During the reprisals in the Algerian Sétif and Guelma towns in May 1945, the French did bombard rebellious urban districts by air force and naval ships, but these tactics were the outcome of brutalization under the impact of World War II and as a rule were not used again; Horne, *A Savage War of Peace,* pp. 26, 100.

order issued on the eve of the attack against the Soviet Union stated: "With regard to offenses committed against enemy civilians by members of the *Wehrmacht* and its employees, prosecution is not obligatory even where the deed is at the same time a military crime or offense."[37] Soldiers were ordered to kill on the spot Jews, commissars, and partisans, but having received this license, they turned to indiscriminate violence, which raised no concerns on the part of their commanders because Nazi ideology encouraged the extermination of *Untermenschen*. There are no records indicating that German soldiers received death sentences for crimes against civilians on the Eastern Front.[38]

In contrast, the Soviet leaders presumed that repressions should target only guerrillas and their civilian sympathizers; "class enemies" were automatically perceived as such. These sympathizers were to be arrested but not killed. The government never issued general orders about "merciless reprisals" in the rebellious regions, as the early Bolsheviks or the Nazis had done. Yet pacification of the borderlands was marked by frequent atrocities committed by security units, police, and militia. Kenneth Maddock writes: "The rules of war are like the rules of the road: any honest and realistic person will expect them to be broken, but some drivers will commit more frequent and more serious violations than others."[39] Norman Naimark notes that among the major armies that fought in Europe during World War II, only the French Moroccan troops matched Soviet soldiers in random violence,[40] but no other army experienced such privations or accumulated such an unquenchable thirst for revenge as the Red Army.

The Soviet leaders knew from civil war experience that counterinsurgency disintegrates into an aimless bloodbath and plunder if security forces are left to conduct operations on their own without strict government control. However, they failed to analyze the incidents of random violence in earlier campaigns and develop a remedy against it because they came to believe in the interwar years that the Soviet system automatically secured such control and because it was dangerous to discuss the issue. Such an attitude, other peculiarities of the Soviet regime, and the brutalizing impact of the bitter fight on the Eastern Front resulted in unauthorized violence exceeding that which occurred in many counterinsurgency campaigns elsewhere. However, because of the same factors, Soviet perpetrators were less certain about the penalty that awaited them than the soldiers of other states. The Red Army executed more of its own men for crimes against civilians than any other army of World War II, and it sometimes issued death sentences for minor offenses, for which

[37] Cooper, *The Phantom War,* p. 168.

[38] On the mentality of German soldiers on the Eastern Front, see Omer Bartov, *Hitler's Army* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[39] Cited in Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), p. 181.

[40] Norman Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 106.

the soldiers of democracies would have received only a few days of arrest. Yet punishment depended mainly on the personal attitude of commanders and local party leaders, many of whom turned a blind eye on random violence. A Soviet soldier arrested for a crime against civilians was more likely to be punished than his counterpart in Latin America, and if he was tried, his penalty usually was more severe than those imposed on perpetrators of similar crimes in the armies of democracies, but probability of a cover-up in the Soviet case also was greater. Such arbitrary justice ensured that the stiff penalties imposed by Soviet military tribunals had a minimal effect as a preventive measure.

Crimes by the Soviet security forces upset the balance between stick and carrot, making counterinsurgency far more violent than intended. Coercion often slipped into chaos, which prompted many of those whom the regime regarded as allies to join the guerrillas. Soviet leaders understood that this was a serious problem. However, they could not effectively solve it because the class struggle they encouraged automatically provoked chaotic violence, the Soviet justice system was not designed to respond to citizens' complaints, and civilian institutions were too weak in the rebellious regions. The authorities could not restrain security troops, many of whom had lost their families in the war, perceived insurgents as Nazi collaborators, and were accustomed to operating outside the law.

Unlike the Soviets, American soldiers in Vietnam were well fed; their living standard was much higher than that of the enemy, and they had no incentive to plunder; they came from a society that subscribed to liberal values; nothing threatened their home country or their families; and the front tours were shorter and the combat far less severe than on the Eastern Front during World War II. The campaign in Vietnam must have had a less degrading impact on soldiers' moral standards than had had the hell of the Eastern Front. Yet no Soviet war crime committed after the reoccupation of the borderlands was so grisly as that perpetrated by a U.S. company commanded by Lieutenant William Calley in My Lai on 16 March 1968, when its soldiers killed about 500 civilians, about two-thirds of them women and children. Nor could any Soviet war crime match those committed by the French paratroopers in Algeria when they killed 64 civilians in one instance and 80 in another to avenge the deaths of their three comrades.[41] Notwithstanding the arbitrariness of Soviet justice, a Soviet officer in charge of a unit that committed an *unsanctioned* atrocity on such a scale certainly would have been executed, his subordinate officers would have received long terms in Siberian labor camps, his superior would have been at least demoted, and privates of this unit would have been sentenced to penal companies. No French paratrooper was court-martialed for war crimes in Algeria. Calley was the only person sentenced for the My Lai massacre, and he served about three years under house arrest. Eighty-six percent of the leftist Vietnam Veterans

[41] Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, pp. 171, 209; Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing*, p. 160.

against the War association claimed that what happen in My Lai was "one of many similar incidents," and even 27 percent of the conservative Veterans of Foreign Wars association confirmed this. Several American soldiers admitted later "a lot of us wiped out whole villages."[42] In the words of Joanna Bourke, "War crimes in Vietnam did not start (or finish) with Charlie Company in March 1968 but were common practice within other army and marine divisions as well."[43] Two-thirds of Americans, according to a *Time* magazine poll, claimed they were not upset when they heard about the My Lai incident, and a Gallup poll taken immediately after the conviction showed that nearly 80 percent of Americans disapproved of the murderer's trial. Given this attitude, it is hardly surprising that in Vietnam, in contrast to World War II in Europe, American soldiers frequently committed war crimes. Calley admitted that rape was "a very common thing," and many other soldiers confirmed this.[44] American commanders covered up crimes as willingly as their Soviet counterparts had; after all, "excluding the My Lai trials, there were only thirty-six court-martials for war crimes committed by American troops [in Vietnam] between January 1965 and August 1973,"[45] far fewer than in the western borderlands, and the sentences were much lighter. In Algeria, Vietnam, and Iraq, racism caused many war crimes and public tolerance toward them. This was not a factor in the western borderlands, but propaganda portraying guerrillas and their civilian supporters merely as German pawns or bandits provoked crimes as much as racism did in Vietnam and Iraq. Random violence is an inevitable by-product of pacification, and Soviet experience must be assessed in context.

The peculiarity of the Soviet approach to insurgency is most visible at the strategic level. Although the structure of the Soviet regime resembled that of Nazi Germany, their pacifications displayed more differences than similarities. As Table 12.1 demonstrates, the Soviet model had an equally remote affinity with those of patrimonial authoritarian regimes or democracies. All these states shared certain methods, but the Soviets often used these common methods in a unique fashion.

The conflict in the western borderlands was too asymmetric for the nationalist resistance to win without foreign intervention. The superiority in military power allowed the state to conduct "sovietization" with any method it chose. The establishment of control over rural areas was merely a matter of time and rational deployment of resources. Uninhibited by moral considerations and possessing a wider range of means than democratic governments, the Soviet leaders were determined to do whatever was necessary to crush the resistance. Analysis of Soviet pacification should focus therefore on its rationality rather than its morality.

[42] Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing,* pp. 162, 163, 167, 168, 179.
[43] Ibid., p. 168.
[44] Ibid., pp. 161, 167, 168, 180, 181.
[45] Ibid., p. 196.

Obviously, the government made many mistakes: It neglected evidence contradicting its view on insurgency; it applied stereotypical criteria of class stratification used in poor Soviet regions to the wealthier western provinces, which caused sweeping deportations; it promoted collectivization in the midst of counterinsurgency operations; and it failed to realize the scope of damage to pacification produced by the licence to violate the law within limits that it gave to security agencies. Other aspects of Soviet policy were sound. A state system does affect the counterinsurgency policy, but its overall impact on the outcome is not obvious. The Soviet regime had as few scruples and as much punitive capacity as the Nazi administration in the occupied regions, but it used force more sparingly and attained much better results. A centralized strategy that coordinated political and military agencies and a doctrine presuming that political solutions should dominate military actions backed with diverse and powerful coercive means limited only by restraints imposed by ideology facilitated Soviet pacification, even though some of its strategic premises were wrong. Western democracies intended to be more lenient and rational than the Soviets, but that was not necessarily the case during field tests because grand theories supplanted the analysis of local conditions, producing mistakes in the assessment of insurgencies and suggesting universal solutions irrelevant for the rebellious regions. Even when democracies identified the root of the insurgency correctly, local authorities questioned the policy formulated by the center and protracted its implementation. Military commanders were reluctant to follow the advice of politicians and adjust the armed forces to antiguerrilla operations. Cultural barriers blocked the efforts to penetrate the local mentality, whereas racism provoked war crimes. Some elements of Soviet counterinsurgency escalated violence above the average level of pacification campaigns elsewhere, but others kept it below this level. It is hard to generalize about the relative intensity of violence in the Soviet and Western approaches because the practices of Western counterinsurgents differed enormously, even though their models displayed many similarities. Furthermore, some factors, such as public opinion pressure, simultaneously escalated and limited violence in counterinsurgency campaigns run by democracies because they relied on massive firepower in order to reduce the number of their casualties, but they could not use methods that the domestic public assessed as immoral. Paradoxically, the absence of such pressure in the Soviet Union produced the same contradictory outcome because, although the regime had no moral constraints, ideological considerations made it view the indiscriminate repressions as unacceptable, whereas its indifference to the casualties of its soldiers prompted it to employ more precise, albeit more costly military tactics (Table 12.2).

Compared with counterinsurgency campaigns elsewhere, the Soviet pacification was conspicuous for the peculiarity of the doctrine rather than the number or gravity of mistakes and for intentional ruthlessness rather than overall casualties. Strategy is rational if it advances the desired goal; whether the goal itself is rational is another matter. The party viewed the conflict in the western regions as inevitable class struggle and sought to pacify them by

TABLE 12.2 *Factors Affecting the Level of Violence in Counterinsurgency: Soviet versus Western Experience (+ = Escalation of violence; – = reduction of violence)*

Counterinsurgency Factors		Soviet Regime		Democracies in the Third World
Political culture	+	Routine repression of actual and potential dissent	–	Societal repugnance to repressions
Context	+	Counterinsurgency begins during World War II > brutalization of the opponents and view of guerrillas as German collaborators and no moral constraints in the use of force > hasty and often disproportionate reaction to insurgency	–	No threat to the home country > lower stakes > easier to be rational
Ideology	+	The class enemy must be destroyed regardless of attitude to the authorities	+	The army is the most progressive element of the Third World societies > support of military authoritarianism as a temporary solution
	–	Class allies in the rebellious regions should be attracted	–	Promotion of liberal values
Image of self	+	Counterinsurgents are managers of the natural historical process	+	Counterinsurgents are managers of the natural historical process
Strategy	–	Victory must be gained primarily through political means > agrarian reform should be immediately enforced	–	A painstaking effort to develop a rational counterinsurgency doctrine
	+	Social revolution from above as a method of gaining support among rural majority	+	Generals: Counterinsurgency is a limited conventional war > disregard of its political aspects
Public opinion	+	No public opinion > no restraint on means	–	Public opinion and peace movements > restraint on coercive means outside direct combat

(continued)

TABLE 12.2 *(continued)*

Counterinsurgency Factors		Soviet Regime		Democracies in the Third World
	–	No public opinion > indifference to own casualties > fight by special police forces > more precision during military actions	+	Public opinion > sensitivity to own casualties > use of heavy weapons in populated areas > enormous "collateral damage"
Counterinsurgents and the local culture	–	Cultural affinity between local population and security forces	+	Cultural barrier between local population and counterinsurgents > racism
Supply and living standard of counterinsurgents	+	Poor supply and low living standard > tendency to plunder	–	Abundant supplies and high living standard > no plunder
Legal culture	+	Licence to violate the law within limits	–	Formal intolerance to law violations
	+	Cover-up of war crimes	+	Cover-up of war crimes

destroying not only the active opposition but all potential opponents, as well as by making "class allies" support its policy, if possible voluntarily, out of self-interest. For the Soviet government, quick restoration of social order or the human cost of the chosen strategy mattered less than the ratio of local people fighting for the authorities and against them. In 1944 the Soviet government had weak support in the western rural regions, whereas in 1946 more peasants fought on its side than against it, which, in its opinion, proved that its approach to pacification was correct. The Communist party operated within a rigid ideological framework that limited its options. As Alec Nove observes:

> It is not in fact open to a rabbi to eat a ham sandwich or an orthodox Hindu to eat cow meat. Thus, if an "alternative" happens to involve such acts, it is not *for them* an alternative at all. This is because, were they to act otherwise, they would cease to be what they in fact are. … There may have been a number of solutions … which the Communists could not have chosen because they were Communists.[46]

Most components of the Soviet pacification strategy advanced the desired objectives; it would be pointless to scrutinize the rationality of these objectives.

[46] Alec Nove, "Was Stalin Really Necessary?" *Encounter* (April):86, 1962.

Appendix A

Note on Used Terms and Geographic and Personal Names

Participants in the conflict – Russians, Germans, and the local ethnic groups – named borderland towns and villages in their own languages: The major Galician city, for instance, was called by its authorities Lwów before September 1939, then L'viv and L'vov between September 1939 and June 1941; during the next three years it became Lemberg and then again L'viv and L'vov until 1991, after which L'vov was excluded from official use. The Soviet leaders renamed many cities; some of these names have vanished, but some still exist. In order to avoid confusion, I call the bigger towns and regions as they were known in English during the period of late Stalinism, and I use transliteration of the contemporary Russian versions for the smaller ones, as they were written in Soviet documents. This approach allows me to use only one name for each particular town; it also lets use the names Moscow, Warsaw, Bucharest, Stanislav, Stalingrad, Ukraine, and Lithuania instead of Moskva, Warszawa, Bucureşti, Ivano-Frankivs'k, Volgograd, Ukraïna, and Lietuva as consistency would have demanded had I used the geographic names as written at present by natives of the countries in which these cities and regions are located. The names of my personages also appear in the documents in different versions. I made an effort to render them in the language of the ethnic group they most likely belonged to. Resistance groups often assigned an alias to every fighter. I give the aliases in quotation marks in order to distinguish them from real names.

For the sake of convenience, I call the regions annexed by the Soviet Union after the Nazi-Soviet pact *western borderlands* and the regions within pre-1939 frontiers *old territories*. I describe pro-Soviet irregulars as *partisans* and anti-Soviet ones as *guerrillas* and use the imprecise but customary adjective *nationalist* when referring to the latter. I define *collaboration* as the active cooperation of the borderland people with either German or Soviet authority. Finally, I call Ukrainians and Belorussians residing in the borderlands *West Ukrainians* and *West Belorussians* as opposed to the East Ukrainians and the East Belorussians living in the old territories.

Appendix B

Note on Primary Sources

Before the archives containing files on Soviet security policy were declassified in the mid-1990s, authors who explored the conflict in the borderlands based their studies on the memoirs of Soviet partisans and nationalist guerrillas, propaganda pamphlets printed by the resistance and the Soviets, a few Soviet documents captured by Germans and nationalists, and reports of the German counterintelligence. None of these sources yielded much information on Soviet counterinsurgency, and most distorted other aspects of the conflict. The memoirs of Red partisans, sanitized by censors, had to fulfill the order of the Communist party to maintain the myth of an all-people's war against the German invaders. Their authors exaggerate the popular support partisans enjoyed; they rarely mention the nationalist opposition that in some regions was stronger than the German one, and if they do, they inaccurately portray the nationalists as mere German pawns.[1] Since few former partisans survived until *Perestroika,* no important memoirs emerged when censorship ended in the former Soviet republics. Although some memoirs published in the Soviet Union are more honest than others,[2] they have limited value as primary sources.

The former nationalist guerrillas who escaped to the West had no censors, yet, not unlike Red partisans, they pursued a political agenda. They typically misrepresented Soviet policy, oversimplified the social tensions in the borderlands, and downplayed the radicalism of their movements.[3] *Litopys*

[1] S. A. Vaupshasov, *Na trevozhnykh perekrestkakh* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1988); S. A. Kovpak, *Ot Putivlia do Karpat* (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1949); A. F. Fedorov. *Podpol'nyi obkom deistvuet* (Politizdat Ukrainy, 1986); Petr Vershigora, *Reid na San i Vislu* (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1960); V. I. Klokov, *Kovel'skii uzel* (Kiev: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1981).

[2] M. I. Naumov, *Zapadnyi reid: Dnevnik partizanskogo komandira* (Kiev: Politizdat Ukrainy, 1980); Alfreds Raškevics, *Zapiski partizana* (Riga: Latviiskoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1963); A. Raškevics et al., eds. *Na pravyi boi, na smertnyi boi* (Riga: Liesma, 1968).

[3] Mikola Lebed', *UPA: Ukrains'ka povastans'ka armiia* (Suchasnist', 1987); Taras Bul'ba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy* (Winnipeg, Canada: Volyn, 1981); Juozas Daumantas, *Fighters*

UPA, published by the Society of Veterans of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in the United States and Canada, is an example of a large document collection on the resistance movement in western Ukraine. It contains records of several guerrilla units, polemical political pamphlets, propaganda materials, and memoirs of uncertain credibility. The war diaries of guerrilla units are the most valuable component of this collection. However, they yield little information about the nature or strategy of the resistance and even less about Soviet policy.[4]

Not until the former Soviet republics opened their archives to the public has it been possible for historians to investigate the conflict in the borderlands. This book is based on archival sources that have been declassified recently. The police aspect of Soviet pacification is reflected in the records of the Head Directorate for NKVD Security Troops and the NKVD's Head Directorate for Struggle against Banditry. These agencies received daily reports, monthly summaries, and statistical data on the actions of NKVD security troops, police, and militia in the western regions. They processed these data and presented their analysis to the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, who, in turn, filed digests of those reports in special dossiers compiled for the key Politburo members: Joseph Stalin, Lavrentii Beria, and Viacheslav Molotov. Political decision making can be traced in the documents of the party agencies that developed counterinsurgency strategy and monitored its implementation. Since large parts of Stalin's, Beria's, and Molotov's dossiers are still classified, the most important party records available are the reports of regional party committees and those of the VKP(b) CC bureaus responsible to Moscow that monitored the work of regional Communist parties. Another important source of material on the struggle between Soviets and nationalists are the records of the Central Partisan Headquarters. They elucidate the complicated relations between Soviet and nationalist guerrillas, Soviet efforts to maintain a grip on the population in German-held territories, and the attitude of people toward the Soviet regime, expressed more freely when its power over them was weak. Although partisans wildly exaggerated their successes, they also discussed numerous problems they faced in the borderlands. All these records are available in the Russian archives.[5] The valuable *Peter Potichnyj Collection on Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Ukraine,* kept at the University of Toronto, contains documents from both sides of the conflict, including those filed by guerrilla units and low-level Soviet regional agencies.[6] In addition to

for Freedom: Lithuanian Partisans versus the USSR (1944–1947) (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1975).

[4] Peter Potichnyj, ed., *Litopys UPA* (Toronto, Canada: *Litopys* UPA, 1978–2004). The three volumes with records of the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council provide meager information on actual leadership.

[5] The Russian State Military Archive (RGVA), the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), and the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI).

[6] The collection contains copies of documents from Ukrainian archives. Most have their original call numbers, to which I also refer.

the archival sources, I use published collections of documents. Several such collections related to the conflict in the borderlands emerged in the Soviet Union,[7] but these documents were picked selectively to support official points of view. Many more valuable collections were published after the collapse of communism.[8]

Whenever possible, I cross-reference Soviet reports and those of insurgents. However, the primary documents rarely offer such an opportunity. When I presented my research at conferences in North America and Europe, I noticed that scholars who had not worked with Soviet documents related to counterinsurgency tended to dismiss them as useless because of the large amount of misinformation they contain. While the latter observation is certainly true, the research of insurgency and counterinsurgency is a priori more problematic than the study of conventional combat regardless of the governments and resistance groups involved. It is harder to confront claims of the opponents in guerrilla warfare: The ideological component is greater, and so is the distortion of facts. Both guerrillas and counterinsurgents veil the reprisals against civilians in their reports, whereas victimized groups

[7] V. F. Shauro et al., eds., *Vsenarodnoe partizanskoe dvizhenie v Belorussii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny* (Minsk: Belarus', 1967); S. Ia. Afteniuk et al., eds., *Moldavskaia SSR v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine Sovetskogo Soiuza* (Kishinev: Shtiintsa, 1975); V. V. Dushen'kin, ed., *Vnutrennie voiska v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine. Dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaia literatura, 1975); V. I. Dashichev, ed., *'Sovershenno sekretno! Tol'ko dlia kommandovaniia'* (Moscow: Nauka, 1967).

[8] P. Sokhan' et al., eds., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia* (Kyiv: Natsional'na Akademiia nauk Ukrainy, 1995–2003); Nijole Gaškaite, Algis Kašeta, and Juozas Starkauskas, eds., *Lietuvos partizanu kovos ir ju slopinimas MVD–MGB dokumentuose* (Kaunas: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1996); Antanas Tyla, ed., *Lietuvos gyventoju tremimai 1940–1941, 1945–1953 metais sovietines okupacines valdzios dokumentuose* (Vilnius: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1995); Grunskis, Eugenijus, ed., *Lietuvos gyventoju tremimai 1940–1941, 1945–1953 metais* (Vilnius: Pasaulio lietuviu bendruomene, 1996); Sergei Zubrenkov, ed., *Lesnye brat'ia* (Moscow: Panorama, 1995); Volodymyr Serhiichuk, ed., *OUN-UPA v roky viiny* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1996); Volodymyr Serhiichuk, ed., *Desiat' buremnykh lit* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1998); A. F. Noskova and T. V. Volokitina, eds., *NKVD i pol'skoe podpol'e, 1944–1945* (Moscow: Institut slavianovedeniia i balkanistiki RAN, 1994); A. N. Dugin, ed., *Neizvestnyi GULAG* (Moscow: Nauka, 1999); S. B. Stepashin, ed., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine* (Moscow: Kniga i biznes, 1995); A. Kokurin and N. Petrov, eds., *Lubianka: VChK-KGB* (Moscow: Demokratiia, 1997); A. N. Iakovlev,ed., *Lubianka: Stalin and NKVD-NKGB-GUKR "Smersh"* (Moscow: Demokratiia, 2006); A. N. Iakovlev, ed., *Stalinskie deportatsii, 1928–1953* (Moscow: Demokratiia, 2005); "*OUN i UPA u druhii svitovii viini*," *UIZh* 2–6, 1994; 1–5, 1995; V. P. Iampol'skii, "'*V Litve bol'she net evreev ... ,*'" *VIZ* 6, 1996; V. P. Iampol'skii, "*Za chto borolis'?*" *VIZ* 5, 1994; V. I. Pasat, ed. *Trudnye stranitsy istorii Moldovy: 1940–1950-e gody* (Moscow: Terra, 1994); V. A. Zolotarev, ed., *Russkii arkhiv. Velikaia Otechestvennaia* (Moscow: Terra, 1999); Vytautas Tininis, ed., *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje, 1944–1953 m.* (Vilnius: Tarptautine komisija, 2003); Hilda Sabbo, ed. *Võimatu vaikida* (Tallinn: 1996); N. I. Vladimirtsev and A. I. Kokurin, eds., *NKVD-MVD v bor'be s banditizmom i vooruzhennym natsionalisticheskim podpol'em na Zapadnoi Ukraine, v Zapadnoi Belorussii i Pribaltike* (Moscow: MVD Rossii, 2008).

tend to inflate the scale of atrocities.[9] Some spectacular documents, such as prisoner interrogation transcripts, should be treated with skepticism because the stunning details they reveal were extracted under duress. Similar caution is required when dealing with overoptimistic claims of guerrillas concerning the popular support they enjoyed because wishful thinking often supplants sober analysis.

Although police and guerrilla sources display equally serious credibility problems, the former are usually more informative. Insurgents leave far fewer records, in particular, if they happened to be defeated – extant records include only those captured by the police or preserved by units that escaped. Most of these are low-level documents that reflect day-to-day activities of particular units rather than the overarching strategy of resistance. Many guerrilla orders are passed orally, and written ones often are destroyed as soon as they have reached their addressees. Much of what guerrillas write is propaganda aimed at the population.

In contrast, the police maintain a large bureaucracy that plans operations, compiles daily reports on the progress of campaigns, analyzes the causes of successes and failures, and routinely passes summaries of its activities to civilian superiors. It is easier to trace the stream of reports from the bottom up and the flow of orders from the top down. The police files reveal the grand strategy of the counterinsurgents and the various tactics employed to attain the strategic objectives. They also show whether lower-level security agencies enforced or violated the intended policies. Police capture top- or medium-level documents from guerrillas more often than vice versa; therefore, police archives reflect the perspective of the opponent more accurately than do documents preserved by former insurgents. All combatants like to portray themselves as more efficient than they are, but guerrillas tend to exaggerate their successes more than state agencies because their commanders cannot verify the reports on their predominant type of action: hit-and-run attacks. The war diaries of nationalist and Soviet guerrilla units resemble Hollywood action movies in which "the good guys" are immune to enemy bullets.[10] Police have a better opportunity to calculate the casualties of the opponent because the battlefield usually remains in its hands even when it suffered a greater loss. Whether police commanders choose to be honest while reporting these casualties is a different matter.

[9] The Moslem Algerian population, for instance, believes that the number of victims of French reprisals in the Sétif Region in May 1945 was about 40 times as high as the official French figures; Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace* (London: Papermac, 1996), p. 27. Estimates of Iraqi civilian casualties by Iraqi and international agencies on one side and counterinsurgents on the other display a smaller but still considerable disparity; Michael O'Hanlon and Nina Kamp, *Iraq Index* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1 December 2005), p. 10. The same is true about the number of casualties in Chechnya claimed by the Chechen resistance and the Russian government.

[10] Documents No. 99, 100, 171, and 215 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia,* Vol. 2, pp. 172–175, 347, 471.

While the Soviet police and party records are far more informative than those of the guerrillas, the question remains how much we can trust them. What are their typical flaws and how credible are they compared with the records of counterinsurgents elsewhere? As with any pacification, some Soviet documents contain deliberate lies, some report the truth, and some misinterpret facts in good faith. It is the proportion of lie, hard facts, and misinterpretation that defines the value of records. The Soviet agencies at the lowest levels produced the greatest proportion of deliberate lies, such as falsified interrogation transcripts, inflated guerrilla body counts, and cover-ups of crimes committed by the security forces. After every important political action, such as amnesty, deportation, or public execution, local administrators wrote lengthy reports about the reaction of the population. They always gave examples of positive and negative attitudes and invariably assessed the positive reaction as overwhelming. Their lie was obvious, not least because they attributed to peasants the bureaucratic Communist jargon such people never used. However, there was a limit to the misinformation these officials could file without risk. Senior officers frequently questioned the credibility of field reports. Those caught lying were reprimanded, demoted, or even subjected to a criminal investigation. Since this struggle for objectivity was unsystematic, it produced only temporary improvement restricted to certain regions. Yet the numerous reports on investigations of false claims reveal their typical patterns and thus alert researchers to possible manipulations in similar cases.

At the medium and higher levels of Soviet bureaucracy, most distortions of facts were due not so much to deliberate lying as to the interpretation of information within the Stalinist ideological framework, which often misled bureaucrats when they analyzed the nature, causes, and social bases of the insurgency. These bureaucrats attributed the resistance mainly to instigation by Nazi collaborators and class enemies and called guerrillas "Ukrainian-German nationalists" or "Lithuanian-German nationalists," absurd clichés intended to emphasize the connection between the insurgents and the hated Nazis. As Krushchev explained, "We call the Ukrainian nationalists 'Ukrainian-German nationalists' because they are loyal dogs of the Germans, helping them to enslave the Ukrainian people."[11] The Soviet bureaucrats used this terminology until the end of the 1940s, long after the Thousand-Year Reich had been swept into "the dustbin of history." In the 1950s, with the escalation of the Cold War, bureaucrats changed the guerrillas' label to "agents of the Anglo-American imperialists,"[12] which they never were. The Communists operated with poorly defined categories such as *class enemy* or *kulak* and used them quite inclusively to fit reality into the straitjacket of class theory. If an insurgent happened to be a *kulak,* the local

[11] Document No. 25 in V. Vasil'ev et al., eds., *Politicheskoe rukovodstvo Ukrainy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2006), p. 89; Document No. 1.23 in Tininis, *Komunistinio režimo nusikaltimai Lietuvoje*, Vol. 1, p. 174.

[12] Document No. 94 in Sokhan' et al., *Litopys UPA, Nova Seriia*, Vol. 7, p. 461.

party leader always mentioned this fact in his report because it fit the "intensification of class struggle" theory; if he was from another background, he was identified simply as "a bandit." Even in those rare cases when the provincial party bosses provided data on the proportional representation of *kulaks, seredniaks,* and *bedniaks* among insurgents and these data clearly indicated the theory was wrong, summaries of the same reports still claimed the resistance was *kulak*-based. This practice strengthened the beliefs of the republican and top Soviet leaders that *kulaks* were the core of the resistance, and the government urged sweeping repressions against wealthier peasants even in regions where their total number was negligible. While nationalists, particularly those belonging to fascist groups, viewed the conflict in the borderlands mainly in ethnic terms and ignored its other aspects, Soviet officials perceived it primarily as a class war and downplayed its ethnic and religious connotations because the class theory disregarded them. Party bureaucrats often presented events in a way that fit the expectations of their superiors and filed reports that glossed over unpleasant truths, yet most of them believed their own rhetoric.

The ideological contamination of information is particularly obvious in the case of western Ukraine and western Belorussia because the governments of those republics transferred hundreds of officials from the old territories to the western provinces. Those officials viewed the world through a Stalinist prism. In contrast, most Baltic leaders had lived outside the Soviet Union and had been unexposed to Stalinist dogmas until 1940. They tacitly questioned illogical Stalinist postulates and filed more accurate reports. Although the party and police agencies at the lowest levels lied more than the others, the information they provided was less contaminated by ideology and thus paradoxically often contains more hard facts than reports filed at the higher level. Whereas the perceptions of reality by counterinsurgents elsewhere also were marred by ideological determinism, it is safe to assume that the ideological component in the Soviet case was greater, and so was the distortion of facts. However, a researcher familiar with the ideologies of guerrillas and counterinsurgents can easily determine where doctrinal fog, demagogy, or wishful thinking obscure the facts, which does not guarantee that the facts can be seen behind this fog. In many cases, the facts can be discovered by contrasting various reports on the same policies or events of the same nature: reports written at the bottom and at the top of the Soviet bureaucracy, those filed in different regions and those produced by party officials and policemen.

It is hard to say which Soviet documents are more credible – those from the party or those from police agencies. The police distinguished resistance with a political agenda from plain banditry, whereas party officials called "banditry" any armed action against the authorities, individuals, or state property. The police focus was narrower, but its perception of reality was less affected by ideology. The police also supplied most statistics. As with counterinsurgency statistics elsewhere, their Soviet counterparts are tricky. A Minister of Justice of the Russian Federation admitted this when he said, "Statistics is an

art, rather than a science."[13] Falsification of data was possible primarily at entry levels and went no higher than NKVD security battalions and police sections in district centers. After the commanders of these units submitted summaries of field reports to their superiors, no more deliberate distortions occurred. Researchers can track these numbers from the bottom to the very top of the Soviet military and political hierarchy.

Casualty statistics are important because they reveal the intensity of the conflict and the major targets of opponents. How credible are the Soviet numbers? Counterinsurgents could not understate their own casualties. They ran two sets of statistics. The first monitored the casualties of soldiers, police, militia, Soviet activists, and other civilians in operations conducted by the security forces, whereas the second set recorded the casualties inflicted by guerrilla attacks. These data are as credible as casualty statistics in counterinsurgency can be; the Soviets calculated civilian deaths inflicted by the resistance perhaps more accurately than did the French in Vietnam and Algeria or the Americans in Vietnam and Iraq.

While the police could not understate their losses, they routinely inflated the casualties they inflicted on the enemy. However, part of these data is also credible. The police ran statistics on killed, arrested, and amnestied guerrillas and their supporters. The numbers of arrested and amnestied persons are hard facts because all such persons were registered and interrogated with written transcripts; criminal cases were later launched against the arrested, whereas most of amnestied remained under police surveillance for years. We do not know how many of those arrested were indeed guerrillas or their supporters and how many were baselessly accused by the police; it is likely that a large part, perhaps most of the arrested were innocent. This data ambiguity, however, is common for counterinsurgency campaigns elsewhere.

As for the killed guerrillas, we can only guess how much the police inflated the number. In the late stages of counterinsurgency, MVD security divisions compiled these data from reports of small units that operated away from their headquarters, and their commanders did not have to present corpses to prove their claims about killed guerrillas. Nobody knew how many insurgents operated in the western regions. It was easy to exaggerate the number of dead guerrillas in such conditions, and police at the lower level did this, under pressure from their superiors to improve the body count. The police did not distinguish guerrillas from other fugitives, such as draft evaders, deserters, and Nazi collaborators killed and arrested during counterinsurgency operations; they were all listed as insurgents. Yet the police could not understate the number of civilians it killed because those were registered by the administration; it could only report all those killed as guerrillas, which it did. Police records show that most killed "guerrillas" were unarmed. However, this does not mean that all those unarmed were civilians, because guerrillas picked up the weapons of their fallen comrades; in the early stages of insurgency, many guerrillas were armed

[13] Peter Solomon, *Sovetskaia iustitsiia pri Staline* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1998), p. 362.

only with cold steel, which the security forces did not count; and draft evaders were outlaws – whether those hiding in forests swarming with insurgents could be regarded as civilians is open to debate. Since the police tended to inflate the number of guerrillas they killed to show their efficiency and simultaneously emphasize the difficulty of their task and thus explain their failure to quickly destroy the resistance, the reported number of local people who died during counterinsurgency campaigns should be taken as the maximum possible, and in reality, the numbers probably were much lower. We do not know how many of those killed were guerrillas and their civilian supporters and how many were draft evaders or bystanders. Such considerations show the boundaries within which the available statistics should be understood. Yet the Soviet approach hardly differed from that adopted by the counterinsurgents of democracies and so does the credibility of Soviet data.

Precise statistics on Soviet deportations do not exist because even internal police data are contradictory. The top security agencies usually defined the number of deportees by those exiled during major operations or by who arrived at the place of exile. However, local police routinely rounded up many members of blacklisted categories before and after such operations. These smaller deportations are reflected in their reports, which did not always reach central security agencies. Furthermore, the number of deportees who arrived at their destinations did not include those who died during transportation. In the rush, police counted some persons twice and could not accurately compile data about deportees dispersed across the Soviet Union. Yet no better source on Soviet deportations than NKVD data exists. Deportations were complex operations requiring precise coordination and painstaking calculations of the manpower needed to apprehend the blacklisted persons, the number of trucks delivering them to the railways, the cattle cars for their shipment to the east and the food rations for feeding the deportees during their transportation. Police planned the deportations well in advance and reported on their progress daily. These preparations are reflected in numerous police reports, which are a far more reliable source than nationalist publications based mainly on rumours. Latvian scholars have compiled excellent statistics on deportations from their region on the basis of Soviet archival files and thus proved the sufficient accuracy of Soviet data.[14] Whenever possible, I use police data on deportations, with preference for figures corroborated by other primary sources. In the absence of such data, I rely on post-Soviet studies by East European and Russian historians, which, despite their flaws, are more credible than Cold War–era writings.

As a whole, Soviet records contain a wealth of detailed and fairly accurate information on insurgency, Soviet security policy, and other aspects of conflict in the borderlands. These records present a new picture of this conflict. They reveal the challenges the administration and police faced and the disagreements between the center and local leaders. They provide frank discussions

[14] Janis Riekstins et al., eds., *Represeto saraksts* (Riga: Latvijas Arhivi, 1995).

of the political and military means used, including the most immoral and brutal ones. These documents show the Soviet approach to a major problem experienced by any state engaged in pacification – the gap between government policy and its actual implementation. They disclose the scope of random violence committed by security troops and the regime's reaction to it. This new information questions earlier unsubstantiated and emotional generalizations about the scale and nature of the conflict in the borderlands and the major participants of this struggle: their goals, ideology, and methods, as well as people's motivations in choosing sides. Police statistics alone invalidate the basic conclusions of studies dated to the Cold War that, having few hard facts, interpreted this conflict as a confrontation between the united local population and ethnically alien outsiders, a war in which the Russian police lost several men for each guerrilla they killed and won only by using brutal force and genocide.[15] Soviet documents show that the police deported far fewer people than the Cold War authors claimed and that the Soviet regime usually used blacklisting criteria other than ethnicity. These records also demonstrate that nationalist guerrillas in every region killed many more local civilians than Soviet soldiers or policemen and that a large proportion of the Soviet casualties were voluntary militias recruited among the local population, which proves that the Soviets had quickly acquired more active supporters than guerrillas and had partially attained their goal to transform the counterinsurgency into a civil war. In addition to the Soviet records, the archives contain many captured guerrilla documents that illuminate the strategy and methods of the resistance, including those its members who escaped to the West prefer to forget, such as extermination of ethnic minorities. This new information leads to a broader discussion about the conflict in the borderlands, nationalism, Stalinism, and the rationality of the Soviet counterinsurgency model in the given context.

[15] Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk, *UPA Warfare in Ukraine* (New York: Society of Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army of the United States and Canada, 1972), pp. 36, 310; Algirdas Budreckis, "Lithuanian Resistance, 1940–1952," in Albertas Gerutis, ed., *Lithuania: 700 Years* (New York: Manyland Books, 1969), p. 376; Constantine R. Jurgela, *Lithuania: The Outpost of Freedom* (St. Petersburg, FL: National Guard of Lithuania in Exile, 1976), pp. 230, 235; Visvaldis Mangulis, *Latvia in the Wars of the 20th Century* (Princeton Junction, NJ: Cognition Books, 1983), p. 157.

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